# The Commonweal

## A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs



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# MACHINE GUN POLITICS

THE KILLING of Huey Long throws upon our political situation a light that is as lurid as the flashing of the shots that slew the dictator of Louisiana and his assassin. It reveals the presence in our American society of a spirit—and even of the incarnation of that spirit—which in Italy, and Germany, and Mexico has smashed free, democratic institutions, and which unless exorcised from the body of the United States will invade and possess its soul, and utterly and evilly transform us from a nation of freemen into either a socialistic horde, or slaves to some native variety of Fascism.

Violence in American politics and in American life in general is an old story, as old as the nation. Lawless recourse to the knife or the pistol to do away with public officials, from Presidents to policemen, can be recalled in thousands of cases. Lynch law still flourishes in some two-thirds of our territory; sporadically in some places, and in others almost completely accepted as a normal rule. Mob risings are a commonplace. Gang wars among criminals, and by criminals against society and its defenders, are as much an element of present-day American life as were the private wars and raidings of the robber barons and the walled cities of Europe in the Dark Ages.

Many of the assassinations of Presidents and other officials which stain our history have been the acts of maniacs or solitary individuals incited to their crimes by private grievances, or paranoiac delusions. This may prove to be the case in the slaying of Senator Long. Therefore, and also in view of the prolonged and terrible record of American lawlessness, the death of the Louisiana dictator may not seem to present that significant aspect which we pointed out in beginning these remarks—namely, the aspect of a new phenomenon, more grievous than the deeds of violence in the past, because more radical in its contempt


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and defiance of liberty and law. We hope that this may be the case, yet we think that the Long assassination may prove to be the sign of a new dispensation in American political life—and we use the word political not in a narrow sense, not merely to include the ordinary processes of a two-party system of representative government, but rather in the deeper and truer sense which defines politics as the realm wherein the fundamental principles guiding any human society are in operation. These principles may not be understood (usually they are not) by the majority of politicians, and those who participate in political action without being professional politicians; nevertheless, they are the operative forces moving beneath all the surface manifestations, and in times of social crisis, such as are now upon us, they become apparent.

What becomes apparent, in a special sense, in the light of the situation in Louisiana—and it is far from being only a local condition—seems to us to be nothing less abhorrent and ominous of evil and danger than the appearance in the public life of the United States of the same organized forces which have transformed countries like Russia, Germany, Turkey, Italy, Mexico and Japan into completely anti-libertarian, anti-democratic autocracies, tyrannies or dictatorships.

The machine guns which (in the end) so ineffectively ringed in the dictator of Louisiana from his organized or unorganized enemies are symbols of the new kind of politics which Americans must either completely banish from their society—now, at once, without any hesitation—or else enter upon a period of machine-gun politics: the politics of physical and moral force; with assassinations almost as common as nominations to office, and bullets instead of ballots as the favored means of expressing political will. And the possible, nay, we think the probable, outcome will be some sort of national Fascism emerging from a welter of state and regional struggles between the forces of Socialism and those of Fascism. In which case, our guess is that Fascism would eventually win.

Huey Long was permitted by the people of his own state to cast aside all the observances and traditions of representative government, and to forge a dictatorship of a supposedly sovereign state which was well nigh as absolute as any other in the world. The rest of the nation, for the most part, considered it all to be a roaring farce. Yet to millions of humble and mostly illiterate folk he seemed to be a popular hero, because before his advent the state of Louisiana appeared (as other states appear to similar underprivileged people) to be possessed and ruled by an oligarchy of privileged and powerful interests, and their political henchmen, and there was no belief that social justice was or could be granted to the many.

The sympathy of all decent people goes out to the bereaved family of Senator Long and also to the even more sad and more shocked, if possible, family of the assassin, who was in turn shot down by Senator Long's bodyguards. The final estimate of the Senator's personal contribution to American politics can be left to calmer times. His absence will unquestionably have an effect on developments in the forthcoming presidential elections by removing his leadership of a division of the Democratic party. The immediate and obvious reflection of every decent citizen, however, must be that murder, that the killing of a man or men, shall not be the means of political expression. We Americans have been prone to excoriate violence abroad without taking effective means for keeping our house in order. We have allowed political passions entirely too much place in our private discussions, a loose use of expressions of personal animosity and sometimes a muttered hope of a solution—depending on the speaker's political alliances—by violence. Politics are the group expression of general principles, and certainly we cannot properly begin to base these on killing. The young assassin showed a tragic and extreme instance of political conviction carried to the point of dementia. The sobering lesson to be gained from the tragedy is that there is only one force with which to oppose passion, and that is the strong force of reasoned calm, a good which now of all times needs to be respected in private and in public. But can we learn that lesson in time to apply it?

Huey Long is dead. But his kind is not dead. Nor are the conditions which made him possible done away with. The crisis advances. The shadow creeps along the dial, and at present it points to social violence.

## Week by Week

### The Trend of Events

THOUGH views of President Roosevelt may differ as widely as do the North Pole and the inside of a fiery furnace, nobody will fail to agree that he knows the ins and outs of politics. Indeed the best criticism of his administration may plausibly be that the nation has traded for a man who was in no sense a politician another who is nothing else but a politician. At any rate, the widely publicized exchange of letters between Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Roy W. Howard served to indicate very well the strategy of the next campaign. The major contention is that the "remedial legislation" of the past two years has now established "a wise balance in American economic life," and that no further radical changes are necessary. "Very

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decidedly," said Mr. Roosevelt, the time for a "breathing spell" has come. "Modernization" of American life does not mean, cannot mean, "revolution." Henceforth, inside the limits established by New Deal laws, the forces of recovery are to be given a chance to expend themselves. Thus the President has maneuvered himself into the following position: the prosperity of yore was unhealthy, the product of wild speculation and unlimited greed; but the "new prosperity" has now been safeguarded in a way calculated to insure safety and sanity. The indubitable signs of business recovery will fit ever so nicely into this conception of things. Action on that terrain will not be easy for the Republicans. Though the queries they put will doubtless be more specific than those asked by Mr. Howard, it is once more evident that the man they are up against is clever—and more than that—with the gloves.

**Magistrate Brodsky Decides**

IT WOULD be difficult to find a more pertinent illustration for the text, "Whither are we drifting?" than the decision of Magistrate Louis B. Brodsky in the trial of six men held for rioting on the SS. Bremen. The question was whether the accused, who had shared in a scuffle with the police and in the act of tearing a Nazi flag from the ship's prow, were guilty of unlawful assembly. There appeared to be some doubt as to whether five of the six had been caught in the act, and this circumstance the court might have stressed. Magistrate Brodsky, however, raised another question. How could one speak of "unlawful asembly," he argued in substance, when the sensibilities of American citizens are wounded by the sight of a flag which denies their most cherished liberties? To the accused, the swastika emblem was nothing less than the "black flag of piracy proudly flying aloft." At any rate, he found that no "unlawful assembly" had taken place, and simply held one gentleman whose prowess against a policeman had left its mark. Now it is evident that in this whole matter the law was the last thing that interested Magistrate Brodsky. He was tickled pink by an open and honest assault upon a national symbol which to him, a good and upright Jew, signifies all that hatred and intolerance have to offer. What did it matter, therefore, that the United States is bound to uphold respect for the flags of recognized powers, and that private property enjoys protection? Or what did it matter that the assembly was not comprised of American citizens defending their principles from attack, but of Communists out to wage war on the hated emblem of Fascist domination?

THE POINT properly at issue is of minor consequence. A German government which has given slight redress for assaults on American citizens is utilizing to the full its partial monopoly of brass when it addresses formal protests to the State Department and stirs up a hulabaloo in the press. But it is acting cleverly none the less. The publicity calls nation-wide attention to an act of Jewish reprisal which is, from the legal point of view, indefensible. Anti-Semites throughout the United States reason that Jews consider themselves above the law; and persons of German blood, still recalling incidents of the war era, begin to fear that an attack upon their rights is in the making. We believe these trends are of the most serious importance. The Jew is of an exceptionally emotional temperament — a trait valuable in many ways, but often likely to serve as a boomerang in a society like ours. More harm is done to his cause (and we know whereof we speak) by such actions as those of Mayor La Guardia and Magistrate Brodsky than can be undone by a week's good-will conferences. American principles can be served only by scrupulous respect for every part of their meaning. Actions against Nazism are catastrophic when they are not in accord with those principles.

**No One to Blame?**

WHAT happened to several hundred war veterans during the recent Florida hurricane would make the material for as somber a tragedy as there is in the files. It cannot, apparently, be argued that any one person was especially to blame for the failure to evacuate these work camps in time. A train which was to have arrived was held up by holiday traffic; and of course there was no possible way to escape once the storm had struck. But everybody knew —or should have known—that flimsy little shacks constituted worse than no protection against the kind of weather to which southern Florida is constantly exposed during autumn. Everybody knew —or should have known—that dugouts are sometimes as effective in the war against nature as in a war against a human enemy. The whole story has this sort of flavor: "Dear me," says somebody in a relief office, "here are 700 men with no place to go; well, there is a spot—this Key area; accordingly, I may proceed to forget about them and attend to other matters." Experience indicates that man's inhumanity to man, often complained of in business and private life, finds its all-time peak when governments take a hand. A corporation, however selfish, can be controlled; there is no doing that to a state. The cremation ceremonies in that desolate, wind-lashed region would, therefore, serve some purpose if they reminded a few of us how fatuous and perilous it is to pile things on the doorstep of the government. That is the surest way to mechanize and vitiate human life.

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### Of Telling the Truth

IN THE course of an interesting discussion on stage indecency, a discussion centering about "Tobacco Road," Mr. Brooks Atkinson maintains, in the New York *Times,* that such a play is within its rights. "The function of art," he says, "is not to promote a code of standards or to establish social ideals, but to tell the truth about all the people who inhabit the world. . . . Sometimes the truth is glorious. . . . But when it is unclean and ignoble, it is still incumbent upon the artist to tell it frankly." The first of the several comments which might be made upon these words is surely that, whether they are right or wrong in incidental implication, they are simply wrong in their plain statement. The function of art is to entertain; and if we hold firmly to that fact, it enables us to discern much more clearly which of the innumerable truths "about all the people who inhabit the world" may legitimately be selected for this purpose and which may not. Those truths which are instantly recognized as normal are legitimate. Even when they involve serious infractions of the moral law, they are capable of being presented both positively and with a relation to the firm pattern of life which sustains us all; and when they are so presented, the onlooker may make the "identification" between himself and the characters which is necessary for understanding and esthetic response, without suffering any disintegration. For the range of moods to which art—especially the realistic art of the theatre—may appeal is almost infinite; and the mood of high seriousness, which beholds the plight of the evildoer with the immemorial and austere mingling of pity and terror, is assuredly one of them.

BUT THERE are other, abnormal truths, which are a very different thing. It is simply not permissible to view them as matter of entertainment; and this for the specific reason that they *are* abnormal, and elicit not the response of recognition and judgment, but primarily the response of shock. They tend, if one chooses to put it that way, to promote a disproportionate response, partly because of the moral deformity which may be involved, but largely because of their direct assault upon taste and nerves. It is not denied that they may also be found entertaining by a large number of people; but it surely cannot be denied that, though it hardly leads to an immediate moral breakdown, people being in the main tough and resilient, there is an element of real danger and disintegration in such entertainment. Moreover, it cannot be denied that in the field of the theatre, where money-making is a necessary object and novelty and "thrills" are at a premium, the danger of the deliberately venal use of such material is great and constant. Not every writer who uses it is being courageous; not every one is bent upon "widening the skirt of light," as George Eliot puts it. Some of them are merely manipulating a sure-fire formula for quick returns; and while it may present selected facts, it hardly presents a "truth" which needs to be treated with respect or which will permanently enlarge the mind of the spectator. How all this applies to "Tobacco Road" will perhaps be a matter of varying opinion; the general principle is more important. There are places—medical schools, psychological seminars, theological seminaries—where "complete frankness about everyone and everything" is really in order, for it will really help to cure "the illness of humanity." But the theatre is hardly such a place. Some rumors of deformity and depravity may be heard there, of course, as they constantly are in ordinary healthy living. But to go beyond that is to presuppose in the theatre-goer the objective mood of the student, and in the playwright the resources and sifted knowledge of the scientist or theologian. It will probably turn out to be a mistake.

### History as a Guide

STUDENTS of history during the coming year will have learned at least something if they note how extraordinarily out of date are those summaries of recent events which assumed that the League of Nations was a kind of pinnacle toward which mankind was slowly tending. For not a few writers, the final triumph of reason was a conference at Geneva; and it was assumed that after having reached this point, further advances were inevitable. Today this Babylon, the mighty, has fallen. We ought collectively and individually to deplore that fact. Nevertheless it is probably wise to look about for some other eminence to which humanity has since climbed. Can this be the unrestricted dominion of force? Has public opinion—the vague but nevertheless substantial entity upon which "liberalism" relied—given way to the man with the machine gun, whose earnestness is judged by the number of killings in which he engages? Or are we living in the dark hour just preceding a rebirth of genuine conviction, when people will be determined to rely not on things as they are but on things as they ought to be? One can choose either view. But it is clear enough that the coming struggle for civilization will be conducted not through organizations, or even in the domain of economics, but in the soul of man. There the changes have occurred which are now reflected in social action, and there other changes must take place if man is to survive as man. Perhaps it would be a good idea to rewrite the texts from this point of view. Meanwhile, of course, the League ought not to be pronounced dead. It may suddenly become very much alive.

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# ETHIOPIA AND AFRICA

By PIERRE CRABITÈS

*The seriousness of Italo-Ethiopian relations cannot be overestimated. Judge Crabitès believes, however, that one current fear—anxiety lest colored Africa band against the white man—is unfounded. He contends that Mussolini's actions establish a community of interest between the British and the Egyptians, that the sovereign tie in Africa is Islam, and that colonial peoples cannot think of Europe as a racial entity. "Color," he says, will not become a political "tidal wave."—The Editors.*

REACHING New York on August 18, and coming practically direct from Egypt, where I have been stationed for over twenty years as one of the American judges on the International or Mixed Courts of Egypt, I have been impressed by the unanimity with which my friends and acquaintances seem to take it for granted that the Italo-Ethiopian conflict will unleash a race war and pit the natives of Africa and Asia against the white man. I fail to agree with this somber prediction. The sky is black. It could hardly be blacker than it is, but the perils which fill me with the gravest concern are not those which everybody whom I meet seems to stress.

Before I set forth why I dissent from an opinion which appears to be universal in these parts, I should like to make it perfectly clear that I do not claim to know anything about India or the Far East. China, Japan and the Philippines are not my happy hunting grounds. My opinion is based upon my long residence in a Mohammedan country and upon my serious attempt to learn something of the soul of Islam. The Patriarch of the Coptic Church of Egypt has often been described as the Pope of Abyssinia. This circumstance emphasizes the fact that Ethiopia was to me far more than a geographical expression long before Benito Mussolini was known to the chancelleries of Europe.

Looking at the matter solely from the standpoint of a man who feels that he understands something of Islam but who makes no pretense to any general knowledge of Asia, I have no hesitancy in declaring that I see no reason why we should become panicky and fear that occidental civilization will be assailed by a mass attack of yellow and black cohorts. If I know anything of the Mohammedan world, it is because Cairo has opened up that vista to me. I shall therefore begin my examination of this problem by looking at it through Egyptian spectacles.

All of us are aware that England is the dominant European power in the Valley of the Nile. If Egyptian extremists were contemplating using the present crisis for purposes of anti-European propaganda, it would get them nowhere to attack Italy because it is the Union Jack and not the Cross of Savoy that symbolizes in Egypt the hegemony of the Occident over the Orient. Community of interests begets kindred spirits. England stands forth today as the champion of an issue that is vital to Egypt. Common sense and the principle that self-preservation is the first law of nature make it improbable that Egyptians will have any impelling incentive to seize upon the present emergency to attack Britain.

Let me marshal my facts to drive home my point. Egypt would be a desert were it not for the life-giving sediment that the waters of the Nile deposit upon her soil. Every Egyptian fellah knows this and interprets Mussolini's rape of Ethiopia as nothing more or less than an attempt to steal the waters of the Nile and, by diverting their course, to make of Italy's existing and contemplated African dominions an El Dorado at the expense of Egypt.

If you get out a map of Africa my meaning will become quite clear. You will see that the Nile which flows through Cairo is a mighty river which becomes two streams some few miles to the south of that capital. This great waterway is formed by two affluents which blend their waters at Khartum. One of these tributaries is the Blue Nile and the other the White Nile. The former rises at Lake Tana in the heart of Abyssinia; the latter has its headwaters in the lake regions of Central Africa.

The Blue Nile—the Abyssinian Nile—is the fertilizing agent that produces the sediment that makes the soil of the Sudan and Egypt blossom like a rose. The White Nile produces the hydraulic power that carries these life-giving ingredients across the hundreds and hundreds of miles that separate Khartum from the Mediterranean Sea. Without the driving force of the White Nile the manna from heaven that takes the form of this Blue Nile sediment would never reach Egypt. But the waters of the White Nile would be but of insignificant value to Egypt if they did not contain the sand of the Abyssinian plains.

Abyssinia has "White Niles" galore which could be used to drive the "Blue Nile" fertilizing agent either to the Red Sea or to the Indian Ocean; that is to say toward a territory which Italy now controls or hopes to appropriate. A

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dam at Lake Tana could do the trick. It is England and nothing but England that is able to safeguard the Sudan and Egypt against this eventuality. Egyptians know this. The present crisis thus engenders in their minds not a feeling of hostility toward the European power with which they are in the closest contact, but rather a sentiment if not of gratitude at least of community of interests.

Two men are not apt to fight as long as they have a common enemy and are conscious of the overwhelming menace that threatens them. Egyptians are thus not at all likely to be influenced at the present moment by any so-called "call of the blood." The flag that is now so prominently displayed in Cairo may be that of a foreign power, but as long as it waves there, it is improbable that the waves of the Blue Nile will be diverted to other channels. This sense of security means too much to the Egyptian for him to be prone to look upon the present moment as a propitious one for starting a disturbance.

If what I have just said be true, it seems that the territorial area in the closest proximity to Ethiopia, instead of acting as a disseminator of discontent against the white race, is more likely to insulate it from subversive influences. The corollary to this is that the "rising tide of color" will most probably strike a dam before it becomes a tidal wave. As I view the matter, its spent energy will be defeated by the law of inertia.

Another factor suggests itself to my mind. When Egyptians, Palestinians and Transjordanians think of foreign control, they visualize England. When Algerians, Tunisians and Moroccans dream of independence, France is the power they conjure up before their mind as the obstacle that defeats them. Mussolini's rapacity has brought a new Richmond into the field. It has told these Moslems that if they, in the first case, eject England and, in the second, France, they will merely be jumping from the frying-pan into the fire.

All this means that the unpleasant reality has but recently been driven home to millions of Mohammedans that it "has been written" that Europe covets Africa and that it is Allah's will that this tide be allowed to run its course. Moslems are fatalists. They know not what fear means. Man for man they are brave soldiers. But they are apt to bow their heads and submit to "what is written," when less courageous men might be prepared to fight.

Then again the "call of the blood" does not reach Moslem ears. To the Mohammedan all who accept Mohammed as the Prophet of God are brothers whatever may be the pigment of their skin. Color, as such, means nothing to the "true believer." I do not refer to this fact because Haile Selassie is a Christian but because I am endeavoring to drive home the point that we are letting hysteria and not logic get the better of us when we imagine that, for example, the Arab of the desert, whose spiritual capital is Mecca, entertains fraternal sympathy for men who reject Islam.

If I refuse to concur in the view so generally held by my friends about the possibility of an anti-white wave starting from Addis Ababa, I feel just as disconsolable as they do—but for entirely different reasons.

## *The High Place at Montabaur*

Mother of God, high on this citadel
once taken by war, how still the night is now!
In spite of all the garrisons of men
sleeping their dreams out in this conquered land,
Or pacing as I paced alone in darkness
until light glimmering showed me where you stand
Serenely waiting in your quiet shrine
to bless all wayfarers, all heads that bow.

Down a curved alley from the market square
just where the road turns sharply out of town
Into the darkness of the open fields
between two cold walls, windowless and grey
In the night, grey without a moon or star,
the cobbles end, a highroad winds away
Endlessly into darkness down the hill,
far from all doors, bearing the dark thought down.

Just here your image rests, your single light
glowing as steadily in the ruby glass
As that compassion, that meek steadfastness,
with which the woodcarver, for his love's sake
Bending above his bench, carved out your form,
graving the wood, sweet-scented dust and flake
That hid your garments, dreamed of reverently,
your quiet hands and feet, your still clear face.

I look with you out from the high-walled hill,
painfully making out as in a cloud
Some half-decipherable, portentous shapes,
a vaporous country of unpeopled mist,
Where valleys change as they are looked upon
and silent windless forests writhe and twist
With all the dreadful slowness of the dark
into strange terrors threatening the road.

Star of the night, when I have left your station
high on these walls, strong garrisoned with sleep,
Then for my soul I pray keep warm the flame
above the empty road where I must fare.
I linger, loath to be companionless
once I have spoken my departing prayer
And turned away from your sweet company
down my long way far from the light you keep.

GRANT HYDE CODE.

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# NOTES ON THE CRISIS

By MICHAEL WILLIAMS

ON MY returning from a journey to several European countries, and trying to reduce a mass of observations and experiences to some manageable order, it seems to me (if I may summarize briefly what was said editorially two weeks ago) that a new sociological classification is demanded by the realities of this curious age. Men and women may be unevenly divided into a minority of "crisis-conscious" people and a vast majority for whom what is going on in the world is merely one more period of economic, or political, or racial, or religious difficulty. The "crisis-conscious" type differ widely, even radically, in their notions as to the causes of the general crisis, and in their ideas, or dreams, of how the crisis may be solved—provided they happen to think this possible: for many of them see nothing ahead for mankind except the return of the Dark Ages.

The writer happens to be a convinced member of the "crisis-conscious." Ever since the World War he has unwaveringly been of the opinion that we are witnessing nothing less than the death of what had been called modern civilization (roughly speaking, the epoch that began with the reformation and the Renaissance), and the life-pangs of some as yet undetermined, and perhaps undeterminable, order (or disorder) of human society. Therefore, in the journey of which he speaks, he recognized his fellow members of the "crisis-conscious" group by a sort of instinct, or as if meeting members of a secret society bearing a badge or making a signal instantly discernible to the members of that society, but completely ignored by the rest of the world. In what follows he sets forth a sort of synthesis of views and opinions, surmises and guesses, criticisms or suggestions, gathered in conversations with all sorts and conditions of the "crisis-conscious" men and women met by him in the countries and cities he visited. Men and women of the Church (some of them very highly placed; others humble priests, or monks, or friars, or nuns); men in various government services; or in the armies; or in trade and finance; or of various political parties, some of them revolutionary; writers, from world-known historians and philosophers to young and unknown journalists; and men and women in the humble walks of life.

At a hotel in Rome, where I had stayed before, the young assistant to the chief concierge, Guillermo, was once more friendly and helpful and efficient (and still hopelessly longing to go to America). In bidding Guillermo adieu, the writer mentioned his hope of returning next year, when the international congress of the Catholic press will be held in Vatican City. "I hope I'll see you then, Guillermo," he said. Behind the spectacles which magnified his dim-sighted, intelligent, yet oddly melancholy eyes, there came a strange expression. "Ah! but will you?" he asked. "Shall I be here then?" "Where, then, may you be, Guillermo?" I asked. "In Ethiopia, I think," he said, "and, most probably, dead. I'm not of the strong ones, Signor. But I shall have to go. Indeed, my class is there already, but because, although not married, I have a family to support—my old parents—I am exempted at present. But it won't be for long." "Then there will be war in Africa, you think?" "Of a certainty, Signor—war in Africa, and most probably, war in Europe as well. The world is turning upside down again."

Nor was Guillermo solitary in his opinion. That Mussolini wills the conquest of Ethiopia is simply taken for granted by the "crisis-conscious" people, of high and low degree alike. It is a minor though important item in the general course of the crisis. If Il Duce can get what he wants without fighting, well and good; but that seems impossible. Anyhow, he will get it or smash his régime—himself to be buried under its debris—and smash the new Italy, and perhaps Europe as well. It is all or nothing now for the master of the new imperial Rome, which dreams what it believes is a realizable vision of Rome once more as the head of the new civilization of the West, dominating the world; not necessarily by arms, but by the power of its prestige, the contagious influence of its culture of "Faith, Work, and Obedience."

In Paris, on Bastille Sunday, guided by an Egyptian taxi-driver who learned his excellent English, and some of his democratic ideas, from an American Methodist school in his native land, I attended somewhat intimately both the demonstration of the United Front of the Communists, the Socialists, and miscellaneous parties and groups of the "Left," in the Place de la Bastille, and the demonstration around and near the scene of the lighting of the Eternal Fire at the Arc de Triomphe, of the Fiery Cross cohorts, and other war veterans—semi-demi-Fascists, and youthful Royalists. The police, and the uniformed troops who supplement the police, those who were responsible for the deaths in the street fighting last April, kept strictly away from both demonstrations, but not very far; they were massed in nearby

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streets, horses and armed motor cars, as well as thousands of men. And that the clash which by prearrangement did not happen that Sunday, when the United Front spent their zeal singing the International, and the Royalist youth in selling their newspapers, both masses marching and counter-marching under the blazing sun, is simply bound to come, and sooner than later, was not only the firm conviction of my communistic taxi-driver (who has known the Paris streets and their fighting people for thirty years), but of many other more highly placed and supposedly better-informed people. The interference with the sailing of the Champlain by the marine unions, protesting Laval's wage cuts, added much fuel to fires already well lighted, and far-spread, and only requiring some gust of passion, or a well-directed intention, to set a-blazing. That Laval (anyhow) will not be able to control the situation was an opinion I heard on all sides. "He is a politician: he will succumb to the other politicians who cannot stand the pressure put upon them by the unions of government employees, and all those affected by the wage cuts and other economies. Therefore, the famous budget will not be balanced—unless, of course, the franc is devalued; and that is what these critics of Laval expect to see happen. And then? A government really of the Right—even though not Royalist: which latter contingency few of those whom I talked with took seriously. A government ruling, and really ruling, by decree. In short, another dictatorship." Guesses, surmises, all of which, events may falsify; but there they stand, testifying to the universal expectancy of great, fundamentally important developments of the crisis in France, among those whom I have called the "crisis-conscious" people.

As for Germany—enigma of all enigmas—on this journey I did not cross its border; but in London, in Paris, in Rome, in Vatican City, there was almost as much talk about German affairs, and German puzzles and mysteries, as about the Italo-Ethiopian problem. That the relations between the Holy See and the Wilhelmstrasse were about as critical as could be without an actual denunciation of the violated Concordat, there was, of course, the long editorial article in the *Osservatore Romano* of August 4 to prove. And behind the talk about this almost official declaration of the seriousnes with which the Holy See regards its relations with the Nazi government, there was much talk, officially unconfirmed, but probably quite correct, of two notes from the Holy See as yet unanswered by Hitler which bring the affair close to some final decision. Meanwhile, the pressure upon the Protestant Christians continues unabated, to say nothing about the unrelaxed antagonism to the Jews. That the rulers of Germany are dangerously near the point of openly forming and fostering some sort of National Church, of which the Deity must prove His Germanic spirit, is an opinion held by some of the best-informed observers of the present Germaniacal régime.

In England, none of the "crisis-conscious" people whom I met took the governmental and press whoopee about the return of good times (for some), the lessening of unemployment, and the restoration of wage cuts to many government employees, as being certain signs of the end of the crisis. These things are good, as far as they go, but they do not go very far in that direction which awakened and adult souls among the English perceive is the way which all mankind is darkly traveling — toward some far different epoch of human life than that which reached its term in 1914-1918, and which has been painfully tinkered with, and partially shored-up, and held staggeringly together in England, France and America since then. Time and tide await no man, and the new time is upon us all; and its tide is not to be controlled in one place, or by one people—even not in the British Channel, or the tideless Mediterranean, or the double-oceaned strand of the Americas. Russia, Africa, India, Japan, China, and the islands of all the seven seas, produce eddies, and cause unforeseen floodings, and deflect hitherto unknown currents, which the western world must reckon with now as its nations struggle with their own domestic problems.

Only in one place, high above all others, do the watchers of the time, observing the world by a light which is not of this world, but which is the light that alone lights truly all the peoples of this world, and all their dark problems—only in that one place, the Seat of Peter, did I find the "crisis-conscious" people and the less serious others of one mind as to what really matters in all the stress and confusion of the age. That mind is, of course, the mind of Christ. But if the world keeps turning away from Christ to follow a myriad confusing Anti-Christs—foolish pagan philosophers; sword-rattling little dictators; fantasts, creating racial illusions; mercenary materialists; and their swarming courts of tired and cynical journalists, airplaning diplomats, chamber of commerce orators—if the world really prefers this nightmare to the Order of Peace and Justice in Christ, which is proclaimed and exemplified by the Vicar of Christ, there can be no real change, and the frightful farce must go on to some ignominious and sordid end.

But Catholics, at least, should turn from all that and listen, and pay heed, to what the Keeper of the Keys is saying. But are Catholics doing so? Are they sufficiently crisis conscious to pay heed in time? The answer to this question—so far as the present writer is competent to give it—must be deferred to another article.

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# THE HIERARCHY OF COTTON

By CLARA FOOTE ADAMS

WITH the perfection of the mechanical cotton picker, out on a Texas ranch, the cotton farmer is brought face to face with the machine as he has not faced it since the invention of the cotton gin by Eli Whitney in 1798. The establishing of the gin relieved the Southern slave of the laborious task of removing the seed from the cotton by hand. Since that time there have been few changes in the production of the commodity. The cotton field has remained a stronghold from which man was not driven by mechanistic devices. And as yet he has given little ground here. He still chops most of the cotton with the chopping hoe, and picks it by hand. Science has adjusted the machine to the production of cotton, but the man who does the producing is not yet adjusted to the machine. This adjustment will likely be a painful process.

While the method of producing cotton has remained very much the same through a long period, there have been certain recent startling changes in the cotton kingdom. These changes have been brought about not by the machine but by government intervention and regulation. The cotton farmer's viewpoint has undergone a change. The tenor of conversation at the business men's club, the cross-roads store, the rural church, any masculine conclave, is vastly different from what it was three years ago. Today the talk runs not so much to crop prospects as to crop curtailment, cotton allotments, ginning certificates, terracing clubs, things that a few years ago would have been meaningless. There is some talk of the machine, the mechanical picker, that on a broad, level stretch can pick in seven hours as much cotton as the most proficient Negro can pick in eleven weeks, and at a cost of less than $1 an acre. Those who speak of the picker speak of trans-Mississippi areas, of vast level fields for the raising of cotton, and of cotton corporations replacing the individual farm. They speak, in their farsightedness, of the dissolution of the Kingdom of Cotton of the South. But they actually believe things will straighten out, and go on, as they have always done.

The Kingdom of Cotton as it stands today is a kind of agricultural hierarchy. Its affairs are administered by four successively ranking groups: the planter class who owns the land and pays the taxes, the renter who owns his farming implements and pays money rent for the land he farms, the cropper who owns nothing and works on the shares, and the hired help who works for wages and lives by grace.

The planter, I said, owns the land. This is what he likes to have said of him. He once owned it, and sometimes he does now. But very often he does not; the local bank, or the state, or the federal government often owns it. But he is considered the landowner, is called "the landowner," and enjoys certain agrarian privileges and prestige that sweeten life considerably at times, and add greatly to its burdens at others. His chief concern in life is his taxes. He pays his taxes if he possibly can because he wants to hold his ancestral acres. They may be worn and thin, capable of producing very poor cotton only, but they are his. They were his father's and his grandfather's before him, and he'll hold them as long as he can. His next concern is his tenants. The tenant system is also an inherited legacy. It was instituted at the close of the Civil War when there was no money in the South with which to pay labor, or rent land; and it is an evil that increases with age. The abolishing of the system, which is under way, will be welcomed by the landowner and the tenant alike. But they are powerless to end it without assistance.

The planter, or landowner, has been accused of oppressing the tenant, of taking from him his just deserts. The accuser overlooks the fact that the landowner has little himself. The money he receives for his cotton is scarcely more than the cost of making the crop. The price received doesn't always cover the cost, and only the cheapest of labor can be employed. The landowner, generally speaking, is poor; consequently the South is poor, its poverty is the object of national ridicule. The trouble with the cotton planter is that too ofen he is a poor business man. He has not learned in a capitalistic world how to take care of himself, or those around him. He is a benign soul, a child of the soil, a disciple of droughts, and storms, and politics. He lets somebody else tell him what his cotton is worth, he takes what he can get for it. The cotton planter is the buffer that stands between a world that insists on cheap cotton and the flesh and blood machines that produce it.

Next to the landowner, in social and economic precedence in the Cotton Kingdom, is the renter. He has not, as a rule, farmed as long as the landowner so his plight is not so serious. Furthermore he has little at stake, he can quit farming and go to town and get a job when he wants to. Frequently he has taken with him to the farm money from town and is the salvation of both his absentee landlord and the field hands around him.

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After the renter comes the cropper. The cropper is the man without an acre. He farms merely because he doesn't know what else to do. In the fall he comes to terms with his landlord, usually a new one, and in a few days he arrives, sometimes in a wagon, again on foot, moves into the first available shanty and begins to draw ahead on next year's crop. The landlord furnishes, besides the house and the land to be worked, a mule, or mules, the farming implements, seed for the crop, and half the fertilizer. Then he advances food, clothes and medicine and "stands" for the doctor's bill if one arises. When the harvest is gathered the cropper gets half of what he makes and out of his part pays for the advances he has received. Frequently after drawing ahead all year there is little, sometimes nothing, left by the time the settlement is made in the fall. Then the cropper is generally ready to move again. So he piles his family and his few household possessions into his wagon, if he has one, and disappears, as twelve months before he appeared, in a cloud of dust up the road. He is looking for a new landlord, and the landlord is looking for a tenant.

The last group in the hierarchy of cotton is made up of the hired help. The hired man might be called the starting-point, the base on which the Kingdom of Cotton is built, but a base so far below the visible structure as to be scarcely discernible to the casual observer. We hear little of King Cotton's hired man. We are much more familiar with the cropper who compels us occasionally to listen to his murmurings. The hired man, who is usually the Negro, does not murmur. He is not yet far enough removed from the Yankee slave ship that brought him over to attempt this. He sometimes picks up his hat and walks off, if things greatly displease him, but he does so quietly and respectfully for he still carries considerable imprint of the shackles he wore. He is good help in the field. He works from daylight till dark, during the "season," for $.40 or $.50 a day, and in good years sometimes as much as $.70 or $.80. On this he supports himself and his children until they are old enough to go to the field, which they do at an early age. Between seasons he picks up odd jobs if he can. But odd jobs are scarce. He hears of surplus cotton, but he doesn't understand. He never had enough cotton clothes in his life, as the ragged cotton garments that flap beside his door on wash day testify.

The new-fangled cotton picker the boss-man was telling him about the other day is something else the hired man doesn't understand. He grins at the idea. He doesn't believe that a metal hand can outpick his trained, sun-browned fingers. Nor does he believe that Providence would take from him the only means of support he knows. "De nigger's been pickin' de cotton all dese years and he's gwine keep on pickin' it," is his reply to the boss-man.

The cropper does not fear the picker. "Hit won't work," he says. And anyhow he and the "ole woman and the chil'un got to eat. What is there to do but work the cotton?"

As for the renter and the planter, well, now, they don't know about the mechanical picker. They saw one over at the Cotton Carnival in Memphis. It looked like it might work, all right. But they couldn't afford to buy one. And it would take a mechanic to operate it if they had it. Anyway the farm is small, they don't need a picker. So they go out and arrange for next year's tenants, and hands.

The Kingdom of Cotton faces, but has not entered, the Machine Age. The ancient hierarchy still stands.

## *The Mirror*

I never feel the dear security
Of home so much as when the wind's a sea
And rains are lances driving work indoors.
As my thoughts pause in the long streaming roars,
With a bold swimmer's poise I take in all,
I watch the haunting mirror on the wall
So hanging, that it focuses in small
The plum-tree wrestling with bright snakes of rain,
The pear-tree volleying its green bullets down,
The wind-flogged trellis with its rosy stain,
And vitreous underlights on the hill's crown.

For these, aloof and alien as their skies,
Grow sharply intimate and humanize
With table-lusters, books in black and red
And bobs of a beloved auburn head,
All pooled in dark clear emerald; there light dwells
As clear as flame of ferns or moss in wells,
As trees that wave in poems, or green leaves
Left stirring as the last of music grieves.

There is a painting by a Flemish hand,
A room's interior of that vitreous kind,
Where bright in gloom all articles are shrined
As in a mirror, charmed from any wind.
There dream-like loved and lover smile and stand;
The path-perpectives to green billowy land
Are such as ours; and gazing long enough
You grow into them, being of the stuff
Which they were also made of long ago.
So in this tiptoe moment of the mind
I almost seem to gaze on my own soul,
Holding the world and all its precious form,
More precious yet because you make it so.
Then thought comes back with breakers of the storm,
And work I must if only for control
Of too much poignant joy, the bewildering sprite
That haunts my days and rides my dreams at night.

GEOFFREY JOHNSON.

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# MISSIONS AS MONUMENTS

By J. WALTER COLEMAN

THE IMPORTANCE of religious influences in American development, particularly in the early stages, is generally recognized. The original thirteen colonies on the Atlantic seaboard owed their beginnings preponderantly to the need on the part of European religious groups for a haven of refuge; and the earlier-settled portions of the present United States, the Spanish and French colonies, were centers of missionary activities. Without disputing their right to the place which historians have accorded the English colonies because of their political and economic dominance, students of Southwestern colonial culture are calling attention to its influence in America. Certainly a knowledge of the facts is essential to a sane and logical historical viewpoint, and there is no more effective way of presenting them than by preserving and calling attention to the physical survivals of our early development.

Rockefeller's reported consideration of the restoration of St. Mary's, Maryland, following the highly successful rebuilding of Williamsburg, Virginia, a project made possible by his aid, should be of especial interest to Catholics. Members of this faith should, however, be even more interested in the preservation of remains actually in existence, notably two historic churches which have been acquired by the United States government and which are administered and preserved by the National Park Service.

The earlier of these churches, Gran Quivira Mission in New Mexico, was set aside as a national monument in 1909. Remnants of a wall constitute the only remains of the first Spanish church built at this site about 1620, but the second church, built about 1650, although also in ruins, offers enough information to permit a visualization of the original structure. The walls of limestone, laid in mud mortar, are forty feet high in places, and, even in ruins, suggest the magnitude of the task confronting the *Padres* with Indian laborers (women and children only, we may presume) in erecting such a monument to religion. Other walls nearby indicate the location of the monastery or convent.

The Spanish mission of Tumacacori, Arizona, created a national monument in 1908, is not quite so old as Gran Quivira, and is in a much better state of preservation. The Jesuit explorer and missionary, Father Eusebio Francisco Kino, is thought to have established this church as the Mission San Jose de Tumacacori about 1690. Eighty years later, with the expulsion of the Jesuits, the Franciscans took charge of the mission, and continued their work until they were driven away and their Papago Indian charges disbanded by the Apaches early in the nineteenth century. Although only the sanctuary and sacristy were covered by a roof at the time of its acquisition by the Park Service, the church with its adobe walls six feet thick is in a fair state of preservation.

While many other national monuments or parks in the South and Southwest are closely associated with Spanish missionaries (Father Escalante's visit to Mesa Verde is an example), Gran Quivira and Tumacacori are the only Catholic churches preserved by the United States for their historical significance as records of Spanish culture. A third site, of much interest in our religious history, is Mount Desert Island, Maine, acquired by the United States in 1919 primarily as a scenic region and designated as Acadia National Park.

It was here in 1613 that Father Pierre Biard, formerly a professor of theology at Lyons, and the Sieur de la Saussaye attempted to establish a colony which should be primarily a post from which missionary work could be carried on among the Indians. Antoinette de Pons, Marquise de Guercheville, a wealthy and influential French lady, made the expedition possible. The colonists, having landed from the ship Jonas, had scarcely begun establishing themselves when the ship treasurer, Captain Argall, of Jamestown, Virginia, appeared on the scene and with a few timely volleys subdued the Frenchmen, killing three men including the young priest, Du Thet, and capturing or dispersing the remainder. The prisoners were taken back to France and the captured ship was returned to Madame de Guercheville, as England and France were then at peace; but no further effort at colonization was made.

A portion of Mount Desert did, however, return to French ownership in a curious manner in 1787. Louis XIV had granted the island to the Sieur de Cadillac in 1688 and he probably lived for a time on his land. His granddaughter, Maria Thérèse de Gregoire, took advantage of the good feeling existing between the American people and France after the Revolution and successfully pressed her claim to a portion of the island in the Massachusetts court. This romantic region is richly deserving of attention as the site of an early colonial venture, based primarily on missionary motives, and as one of the few French colonial sites on the Eastern coast of the United States.

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French missionaries are commemorated in a more direct way within the present Military Reservation of Fort Niagara, where a cross is to be erected by the National Park Service in memory of the one placed there by Father Jean Millet, S. J., in 1688. Here the Chevalier de la Troye had established Fort Denonville in 1687. The garrison suffered severely during the following winter because of improper supplies, eighty men including the commander having died before the remaining twelve were relieved late in April, 1688. Father Millet, who accompanied the relief expedition, arrived at the fort late in April, near the end of Lent, and, as one of his first acts, erected a cross, eighteen feet tall, hewn of oak. With the legend *Regnat, Vincit, Imperat Christus*, the cross was set up and blessed in the middle of the square on Good Friday. When the post was abandoned on September 15, 1688, the last recorded act was one of devotion as the men gathered about and Father Millet said Mass.

Certainly no aspects of American colonial culture are more significant than the religious, and none are more deserving of preservation in their physical survivals. Significantly at Jamestown it is the ruin of the church which has survived, rather than a military or economic relic. The Swedes in Delaware exerted small influence as a national force, but their church remains. The history of this country which has furnished toleration, if not equality, to Calvinist and Catholic, to Mormon and Mennonite, has been enriched by the deeds of men who left no monuments in stone, men like the Presbyterian Whitman and the Jesuit De Smet, but their place in the national memory is assured and their work is recognized in the sites which they made historic. Such recognition is given by historical preservation movements, privately, by counties, municipalities, states, and by the United States through the Historical Division of the National Park Service.

## *Morning after a Storm*

This morning she was standing in the flowers
Chiding a brood of hollyhocks that lay
Half-heartedly against the wall. For hours
She sauntered 'round, clucking her time away.
She shamed the asters too for huddling there
As though one storm or two could be the end.
She tucked a broken runner in her hair.
(Back on the window ledge, it soon would mend.)

She had known storms to blow her soul away
And felt the blast of winter in her heart;
She could remember times when snow would lay
Tier on tier above the first white start.
But life to her was like a clump of sod
In some perennial field set out by God.

JOHN ROBERT QUINN.

# THE BOOK AND THE BATTLE

By PADRAIC COLUM

WHEN that sainted man and great multiplier of books in Ireland, Colum-cille, visited the monastery of Druim Finn, he found the Abbot Finnen all lordly importance. It was not long until he came to know that there was a double reason for the Abbot's open self-satisfaction. In the first place, the King of Ireland, even Dermott, was to visit his monastery on the morrow. And in the second place, he had received from a monastery in Gaul a book that no other monastery in Ireland had a copy of. It was no wonder that Finnen had that swelling pride in him. He took Colum-cille into the writing-hall and showed him the book; then he hurried away to make preparation for King Dermott's reception.

There were no monks at work at the writing-tables; no one was copying or illuminating pages of books: all were making ready for the King's coming. Colum-cille propped the new-brought book before him and began to read its pages. It was a book about the Gospels by one of the great teachers, and it contained comments and elucidations that should be made known to all who were bringing Christ's words to men. Long had the monasteries of the West waited for this book: now it was here, in the writing-hall of Druim Finn.

Leaves of parchment were before Colum-cille and a rack full of quills and different-colored inks. He dipped a quill into ink, and began writing, copying the first page of the book that was before him. He lost thought of everything except the need of getting on a page the words that were on the page before him. He wrote on and on, looking only from the page he was writing onto the page he was copying from. As he wrote, the pet crane that used to follow him on his journeys flew in through the window-opening and stood movelessly on its long legs in the middle of the writing-hall.

The bell rang for the meal in the refectory, but Colum-cille did not hear nor heed it no more than did the crane. But unlike the crane, he moved, his hand making lines of writing across page after page of parchment. The writing-hall was darkening as the sun went down. Then the crane moved: it was wont to fetch a candle for Colum-cille when the darkness came and he was still engaged in writing. It stretched up and took a candle from a shelf and brought it to him. He struck fire and lighted the candle and went on copying from the book; now page was laid on page before him.

The bell rang for the monks to retire to their cells. Then it became known that Colum-cille was not amongst the brethren. One saw a light in the writing-hall and told the Abbot of it. Finnen hurried there. He opened the door. As he did, the pet crane that was standing on guard struck with his beak. The Abbot's knee got a hard tap, and only that the stuff of his robe was thick, his knee would have been knocked crooked on him. He went hobbling and stumbling down the passage and away from the writing-hall.

But what could be going on there? He sent one of

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the novices to find out and tell him. The lad went to the writing-hall. But when he came to the door he thought before opening it. Then he drew back the little shutter that was in the middle of the door. He saw Colum-cille at the table, writing and writing away, the candle behind him nearly burnt out. He had only a second to see this, for the crane struck with its beak and, catching him below the eye, laid his cheek open with a gash. The novice gave a cry and ran down the passage to the Abbot's cell.

Colum-cille did not hear nor heed the cry, for he was now upon the last page, and the candle, guttering, was making shadows on the page. But he wrote on and on. And the novice in his cell was telling the Abbot what he had seen—Colum-cille copying the book that had been sent their monastery from the monastery in Gaul.

Abbot Finnen was put into a great temper by this news. With his seniors about him, he went into the writing-hall and bade Colum-cille desist from copying. But Colum-cille did not hear nor heed him, for now he was writing the last words and the candle was going out. Then the last words were written, and the Abbot and his seniors stood around him, speaking to him. He was so toil-worn that what they said did not have any meaning for him. He put all the parchment-pages together, and wishing the Abbot and his seniors the peace of the night, went to his cell and, lying down on his bed, fell fast asleep.

He was awakened on the morrow by the jangling of bridle-chains as King Dermott and his attendants came to Finnen's monastery. He knew then that he had done something that he would have to make excuses for—he had made a copy of Finnen's book without asking permission. But Finnen would have to have the book copied and copied many times, for that book, long waited for, was needed in many places. He went from his cell and walked in the garden, and saw the King and his attendants going to the repast that was prepared for them. And he thought that in a while he would go and excuse himself to Finnen, and thank him for the opportunity of copying the book, and then leave the monastery, taking the copy he had made with him.

Then came a novice and summoned him to the presence of the Abbot and the King. They were in the writing-hall. And no sooner had he entered and saluted the Abbot and the King, than Finnen reprimanded him for copying without his knowledge or leave the book that had been sent him from Gaul. Colum-cille took up the copy he had made and held it in his hand.

"I labored that the wisdom that is in your book might be made known to men who have longed to know it," he said to Finnen.

"I would have them come here to read the book," said Finnen, "and so have my monastery famous throughout all Ireland and the western world."

"That is not a worthy consideration," said Colum-cille, "and I am glad that I have this copy to take away with me."

"You have not that copy," said Finnen, "for that is the child-book of my parent-book, and it must remain here."

Then Colum-cille turned to King Dermott. "It is well that you are here, O King," he said, "for you give utterance to the laws of Ireland. Is it not right that the wisdom that is in this book should be made open to many people?"

King Dermott shook his head. "The parent-book is Finnen's and the child-book should be Finnen's also: this is my judgment, and no other judgment is possible. You, Colum-cille, may not take away the copy you have made."

"It is not a worthy judgment, O King of Ireland," said Colum-cille, "and I shall appeal to you on it: I shall appeal to you where you give judgment upon high issues, to you on your judgment-seat on Tara. For know, O King, that this is not a small issue between Finnen and myself, but a high issue and one affecting generations to come."

# WHEN I THRESHED WHEAT

By ROBERT SPARKS WALKER

THIRTY years separated me from the last big experience—the year I quit the farm—and when the invitation came from my octogenarian father to come and assist in threshing wheat, I joined my brother, and we together traveled the same distance in accepting the call. I felt a personal interest in that diminutive crop of wheat, for had not my brother and I accepted a previous invitation in the month of June that laid the wheat low with an old-fashioned cradle in the fields where bob-whites called all about us?

In some parts of the country, growing a crop of wheat is becoming a lost art. This is true of the country in Tennessee where I grew up. The crop of wheat was small, otherwise we could not have figured so prominently in its harvesting and threshing, but it was of the proper size that we could take the lead, even though the lack of practise had almost placed us on the impossible list as helpers in such a worthy annual event.

The power that was to separate the grain from the chaff, as well as to separate me from my perspiration, was originated in gasoline explosions of a small engine. While the engine, which had not been used in many, many months, was being carefully groomed, Harvey, the twelve-year-old colored boy, and I climbed into the large barn loft where the small crop of wheat was stored in bundles. Sheaf by sheaf we tossed it near the opening where it would be most convenient to the feeder. Scarcely had we begun to disturb the dry bundles before the old barn loft was a mass of dancing Indian meal moths. Thousands of them swarmed about us, reminding me of the annual visits of the May-fly to our city. If any housekeeper who is often puzzled over the mysterious appearance of the larvae of moths and beetles in flour and meal and their gaining ingress to the home, could have witnessed that scene in the old barn loft the secret would have been revealed, for there were enough of them in that small storage of wheat bundles to lay more than one egg for each grain of wheat!

In the midst of the moth storm, a lank-looking black

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dog attracted my attention by his running rapidly, as a pole vaulter does, and leaping violently against the barn wall. As his feet struck the boards, some six feet high, the dog made a desperate attempt to climb the rest of the distance. A half-dozen times he backed off and struck the wall wildly and with tremendous force, his claws making a long-drawn-out scratching noise as he glided back to the ground. His wild behavior and boldness attracted my attention. Finally, I was genuinely thrilled when I saw that the dog was my old hiking companion, St. Nicholas, who had been going with me into the great outdoors for the last four years on nature trips. The dog lived a mile away, but had come that morning with his master who was to assist us in threshing wheat. He had heard my voice up in the barn loft and he had recognized his old friend and companion, and now was determined to get back into his company at all costs. I thrust down the long ladder, and presto! St. Nicholas scaled it in a twinkling of an eye and leaped up and embraced me lovingly amid the dry sheaves. If that one little experience had been the only compensation for the entire day, the trip to the country, and the toil in the dust and chaff would have been worth a thousand times its cost! It gave me the opportunity of witnessing the ardent love of a dog for man, and it is no mean thing to boast about! If I had a half-dozen friends as faithful and as true to me as St. Nicholas is, surely I should never lack love, sympathy or assistance of any kind as long as I live. For the rest of the day, St. Nicholas remained close by my side.

Every person was self-appointed at his respective position. Owing to a slight physical ailment which argues that I should remain out of dust, even avoidng a dusty road, the task of measuring and sacking the grain fell to my lot. My brother superintended the riddles and became the "man with the pitchfork."

A man whom I have been meeting for twenty-odd years, and whom I never once saw outside a pair of blue overalls, was the engineer. He was crippled from rheumatism, and hobbled with a cane. Hitherto, he had always appeared to me as an awkward man, ever clumsy and out of place almost everywhere. When the engine began to spit, and the thresher commenced to buzz, and the belt flew off, knocking my legs from under me, I got up, looked toward the engine, and for the first time in my life I saw my ever-awkward-looking rheumatic friend standing by his engine, as graceful as the wood thrush in his haunts, as an artist with his brush, or a poet with the pen! Now, I thought to myself, "I have discovered why men and women appear awkward: they have simply failed to find their lifework for which their natural talents fitted them." I discovered that this man loved machinery, and especially engines; that he was never so much at home as he was when working with engines. Graceful manners, looks and gestures seized him as soon as he came in contact with something that brought him into the atmosphere of his natural talents.

The same day, I saw another little old man, who always wore a derby, probably the same hat that I saw him with a quarter of a century ago, for he was a frugal person. He was somewhat round-shouldered, and I had been accustomed to meeting him for the last forty-five years. Always awkward, always out of place, his body and his behavior never seemed to harmonize with anything he undertook to do. But that day, as I passed his home by the side of the road, I saw him sitting in the midst of a pile of large pumpkins which he had on sale. Never before had I seen a human frame that harmonized more gracefully than did his with his natural wares. His shape, his face, his smiles, his round shoulders, blended harmoniously with his surroundings. His awkwardness gave way to extreme graceful manners in his pile of plump pumpkins, and I saw him as I never had seen him before. Let a man find the employment that he is best fitted to do, and he cannot escape beng graceful.

Our threshing outfit was a small affair compared to the kind employed by men who operate them for the public. But it was large enough to fill the air with a hum and a roar; sounds that made the blood run warm. The old thresher banged and rattled and stirred up the dust sufficiently to give us all the thrills that we were seeking to resurrect.

Our engine was so small that it could scarcely propel the fan fast enough so that much chaff tried to escape with the kernels, which I tried to throw out. The wheat came fast enough to keep St. Nicholas and me busy changing our positions. Fortunately for the threshing crew, the hum and the roar of the machine served the same purpose as band music does before a battle. A man can endure twice the amount of hard labor without fatigue or fear when inspired by music, and it presses him to quick action and speedy decisions.

Soon my wheat came out bearing more chaff than I could accept. The graceful engineer gave me more speed, the riddles were readjusted and, as a consequence, the grains parted company with the chaff before knocking at my measuring door.

Memories of a golden-grained past the engine of insufficient horse-power gave me when it should have been pouring out kernels. Between my last experience and today, I had founded a home, had reared a family and had finished one career as an editor. I proceeded to measure wheat. Out comes trash; the fan fails to revolve fast enough. I see it takes a machine with a steady exterior and a palsied interior to bring out the clean grain. Yes, and next came a living comedy, that moved directly toward me. A black spider had passed through the mill, escaped the not always accurate sieve, and approached me through the grain chute as though he had St. Vitus's dance. The spider presented a ludicrous spectacle as he shimmied out with the grain and landed squarely in my measure, climbed to the edge and seemed to meditate over the queer kind of Coney Island playhouse he had been cast into.

Our threshing outfit, although somewhat of a miniature, was large enough to bring back the spirit of wheat threshing of the past. It brought with it the dust, the straw, clean grains, noise and confusion. As delightful as the experience was, however, I was glad when the work was over; in the meanwhile hoping that there might be similar opportunities awaiting me in the future.

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# Seven Days' Survey

*The Church.*—The Holy Father celebrated Mass, September 7, in the Basilica of St. Paul-without-the-walls for 12,000 veterans of the World War from sixteen different countries; 2,000 chaplains were also present. His Holiness thus concluded his address to the veterans: "May God give this peace of justice, truth and charity, born of honor and dignity, born of right and respect for all rights, which everywhere announces the presence of happiness for each and all." * * * In connection with the National Eucharistic Congress to be held at Cleveland, September 23 to 26, a large missionary exhibit of forty booths has been arranged, as well as a historical exhibit depicting the growth of the Church in the United States. * * * Next month a statue of Saint John Bosco (1815-1888), founder of the Salesian Order, will be placed in its niche above the great pilasters of the Vatican Basilica with the other statues of founders of religious orders. Of the thirty-nine niches for founders' statues thirty-one are now occupied. * * * More than half the archbishops and bishops in the United States are expected to attend the National Conference of Catholic Charities to be held at Cincinnati, September 29 to October 2. Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen and the Honorable Alfred E. Smith will address the closing session of the conference. * * * The N.C.W.C. News Service reports that Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia was educated by Catholic missionaries and that he has braved excommunication by the Abyssinian Abuna by contributing to the construction of Catholic institutions. * * * The first world congress of the Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne was held in Brussels last month; 100,000 young workers from Belgium, Canada, Colombia, England, France, Holland, Lithuania, Madagascar, Poland, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland participated. * * * Readers of the London *Universe* have already contributed over $8,000 for the Catholic families who were evicted during the recent anti-Catholic riots in Belfast. * * * Three bishops and 118 priests were included among the 700 passengers from England, Ireland and Scotland on the first All-Catholic Mediterranean cruise; about 100 Masses were celebrated daily. A visit to Castelgandolfo for an audience with the Holy Father was included in the three-week cruise.

*The Nation.*—The continued improvement of business throughout the country was being variously noted and made the occasion for expressions of conditioned hopefulness. A statement from the American Federation of Labor declared, "The present business upswing is the healthiest thus far; it is the first not due to government spending or currency action; the first which seems due chiefly to inherent economic strength." The federation pointed to the fact that orders for automobiles in the first half of 1935 were 75 percent above last year and machine-tool orders, 45 percent higher; that the automobile business was spending $100,000,000 on production equipment and the steel industry an estimated $130,000,000, which should bring more employment in the heavy industries; and that the index of business showed that it was over half-way back to normal. Employment and income of wage earners, however, were shown to be lagging, according to various computations made by the federation. * * * At a national business conference in Boston, Mr. Rudolph S. Hecht, president of the American Bankers' Association, said that from his wide contacts with bankers their "composite thought" was "no longer haunted by the fear of impending disaster." * * * Apropos of the new set-up of the board of governors of the Federal Reserve System he commented, "The foundation has thus been laid for the creation of a real Supreme Court of Finance—powerful, independent and charged with tremendous responsibilities" Mr. Hecht, however, wondered if men of the proper caliber could be found who would accept appointment for a long period of years at a salary of $15,000 a year. * * * Not so bright was the picture of the condition of the railroads presented by the Interstate Commerce Commission. Only 11 out of the leading 50 met their costs and the Class 1 lines suffered a net deficit of $62,-025,201 in the first six months of this year. * * * The President authorized expenditure of $27,315,217 for a national program of arts and letters under the direction of Mr. Bruce McClure, head of the Works Progress Administration division of professional service projects. * * * Postmaster General James A. Farley will resign at the beginning of next year to devote himself to chairmanship of the Democratic National Committee and will be succeeded by Mr. Frank C. Walker, now director of the National Emergency Council and head of the Division of Applications and Information of the Work Relief Program.

*The Wide World.*—The League of Nations witnessed scenes as bizarre as they were serious. An exchange of speeches between Baron Pompeo Aloisi and Professor Gaston Jeze resulted in an oratorical victory for the second, but the net result was that the Italians considered themselves insulted and demanded that the meeting adjourn. Conferences were later resumed, under the rule that every time a spokesman for Ethiopia spoke the representative of Il Duce was to leave the room. The upshot of the matter was that a committee of neutral statesmen, headed by Señor de Madariaga, met to weigh the issues under dispute and to suggest a compromise formula. On September 9 the League Assembly was convened. It was thereupon decided to appoint as president Eduard Benes, the adroit Czechoslovakian diplomat, instead of Eamon De Valera, who had been slated for the job. The Assembly evidently feared that Mr. De Valera would be too honest. Dr. Benes immediately set to work, and in a day had Geneva talking in a polite diplomatic whisper. Few, however, believed that anything substantial could

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be achieved, beyond saving the face of the League. Reports from Africa indicated that troops were moving up to the Ethiopian border, though steadily falling rains might prevent the actual outbreak of hostilities. Sir Samuel Hoare made a challenging speech demanding that the League enforce sanctions "against aggression." * * * The Salzburg Festival was eminently successful, the principal attraction being the music of Mozart as interpreted by a variety of famous conductors. A brilliant international tourist throng filled the coffers of local innkeepers; but evidences of prosperity were still considered meager and unconvincing. * * * Early dispatches indicate that the *Parteitag* at Nuremberg, which opened on September 10, stressed military preparedness. Over 750,000 guests were expected in honor of the occasion. Hitler's address was awaited with interest. * * * Secretary of State Cordell Hull published correspondence indicating that discussions had been in progress with Canada for the purpose of arranging a trade agreement. So far, however, nothing definite has been accomplished, beyond indicating that both governments were willing and ready to go ahead.

* * * *

***Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Howard.***—On September 6, Scripps-Howard newspapers formally opened the 1936 campaign by publishing an exchange of correspondence between President Roosevelt and Mr. Roy W. Howard. The second had written: "Any experienced reporter will tell you that throughout the country many business men who once gave you support are now not merely hostile, they are frightened." He inferred that the principal reasons for this sentiment were three: belief that the President was trying to get "revenge" through taxation of a confiscatory nature; that the government was sidetracking recovery in the interests of experimentation; and that there was in progress a "revolution in disguise." Mr. Roosevelt denied that the purpose of the tax program was to destroy wealth, and declared that the objective was "to create a broader range of opportunity, to restrain the growth of unwholesome and sterile accumulations, and to lay the burdens of government where they can best be carried." He spoke of recovery most flatteringly: "It is a source of great satisfaction that at this moment conditions are such as to offer further substantial and widespread recovery." Finally he repudiated frankly the notion that a "revolution in disguise" was desirable. The most important immediate effect, however, was that a "breathing spell" was promised industry. On the strength of that assertion, the markets registered a noticeable and justifiable advance.

***The Mexican Situation.***—On August 30, President Cardenas promulgated a law defining the limits within which the nationalization of property may apply. Concerning it the Mexican correspondent of the N.C.W.C. writes as follows: "Is the purpose of this law to bring about stricter enforcement of paragraph II of Article 27 of the Constitution which stipulates that 'religious institutions known as churches, irrespective of creed, shall in no case have legal capacity to acquire, hold or administer real property or loans made on such real property,' or, is the intent to establish a regular procedure in such matters on the part of the federal government and to protect individuals from summary seizure of their property? The fact that the statute just promulgated by Cardenas limits the seizure of privately owned property to such instances as the 'habitual' use of a building, or home, for acts of public worship 'held with the knowledge of the owner,' gives some basis for the latter interpretation." The President has also ousted the Governor of Colima, Salvador Saucedo, and has given assurances that religious rights would be respected within the state. So far, however, no priests have been permitted to officiate, and all churches remain closed. In so far as education is concerned, the situation remains unchanged. That Mexico intends to establish a "library" in San Antonio, Texas, to serve as a "cell" from which culture as interpreted by the National Revolutionary party will emanate, was indicated in an address by José Angel Ceniceros, acting Minister of Foreign Relations.

***Japan Plans.***—An expression of the plans of the Japanese military party, if not of the entire Japanese government, for Japanese hegemony of eastern Asia, was given in an interview to the correspondent of the New York *Times* by Major General Rensuke Isogai, military attaché of the Japanese Embassy at Peiping. "Japan will not tolerate the establishment of a Communist government in any portion of China or in any other part of eastern Asia, but will act independently to destroy such a régime," said General Isogai. This was said with particular reference to cables from Tokyo stating that the Japanese army might assist the northern provinces if the Communist strength increased there. "Chiang Kai-shek several times has asked for Japanese military assistance in his anti-Red campaign," General Isogai continued, "and Japan has always refused. If Japan acts against the Communists it will not be as a measure of assisting Chiang Kai-shek but in order to stamp out the Red régime, thereby protecting the areas bordering on Manchukuo. . . . The entire political and military situation in North China is unsatisfactory and if not improved at an early date in accordance with the Chinese pledges of last June, the Japanese army must necessarily take appropriate action. . . . The populace of North China at present is terribly impoverished, creating a condition which Japan cannot permit to continue along Manchukuo's borders. Neither do we want to foster economic projects which would merely further impoverish the masses and enrich North China officials and militarists. Therefore sweeping changes in the personnel of the North China administration seem inevitable before genuine cooperation is feasible."

***Catholics in Germany.***—While religious manifestations continued, the pressure exercised by the government steadily increased. In Silesia Father Horoba was fined 500 marks—an enormous sum for a German priest—because he had advised a woman penitent not to send her son to the place indicated by the Landjahr officials. The

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reason given was that he would be granted little opportunity to practise his religion. When the woman told her husband what had occurred, he angrily reported the priest to the police. Father Horoba pointed out that he was not free to discuss what had happened in the confessional, but stated that the rules laid down by the diocesan authorities concerning the Landjahr were such that a penitent seeking advice would have to be given a negative answer. In spite of the fact that the priest had an excellent war record, the court pronounced sentence on the ground that references to the Landjahr were political and not religious. * * * Actions against Catholic youth groups were intensified. In Hanover, all civil servants were ordered to cancel their memberships in confessional organizations and to cause their children to join the Hitlerjugend. The government, said the order, was bringing no pressure to bear on the individual conscience but was merely insisting that those who did not wish to conform stop "participating in the national reconstruction." Several plants belonging to I. G. Farben announced that in the future they would employ only young people who belonged to Hitlerite organizations. Despite all this, Baldur von Shirach, Reich youth leader, told an assembly of foreign diplomats and journalists that membership in the Hitlerjugend was entirely voluntary, and that those who refused to join "would suffer no ill effects." Catholics were, however, relieved at seeing that the projected attempt to give Hans Kerrl a free hand in "regulating" ecclesiastical affairs had apparently been frustrated.

*A Challenging Figure.*—Although he has retired from political life, Mahatma Gandhi is still busily engaged in the regeneration of India, according to a recent Associated Press report. His present headquarters are in the center of India, at Wardha, "half village and half town." In order to enable the villagers to better themselves physically and economically Gandhi is teaching them to expend a minimum of time and effort for food and clothing. He himself has changed to a diet of uncooked milk, vegetables and sweet fruits, since he has found that a larger amount of cooked food is required to provide equal nourishment. On this simple fare the sixty-five-year-old Indian leader is able to walk four or five miles and work for nineteen or twenty hours a day. When he is not on trips to other villages Gandhi holds a half-hour conference with his chief assistants at Wardha six days a week. In order to make each village as self-sufficient as possible he encourages the introduction of many handicrafts, the surplus products of which are to be sold in the cities. Once the village life is brought to an adequate subsistence level, Gandhi plans improved sanitation and other constructive measures. He believes that the building up of village life in accordance with his ideas will go a long way toward destroying Untouchability, a reform he most ardently desires. In the present campaign each village worker is asked to take a vow to withdraw from political activity, for the Mahatma says, "Liberty must come from within, not without." While Gandhi is working for his own people he is seeking a peaceful solution of the Ethiopian dispute by prayer, which he says is the only means he has.

*A Generals' Peace.*—As we go to press there is talk of a genuine settlement of the Chaco dispute in spite of the collapse of parleys between the Paraguayan and Bolivian peace delegates. General Enrique Peñaranda del Castillo of Bolivia and General José Felix Estigarribia of Paraguay are said to be arranging the terms of peace between them in a most amicable manner. At the outset General Estigarribia made it clear why Paraguay was not willing to cede a port on the Paraguay River. He offered other concessions which General Peñaranda is said to have regarded favorably, although this port was to provide Bolivia with the outlet to the sea for which she fought. Both generals are quoted to the effect that they will not allow politicians to interfere with the conclusion of peace. If the peace terms they agree on are not accepted by both nations, it is expected the generals will force their acceptance by threats of military revolt. There will be further deliberations within a few days.

*Sterilization in the United States.*—A survey made recently by the United Press shows that approximately 20,000 persons have been sterilized in this country by operations performed under eugenic laws existing in eighteen states. The Catholic Church has led the opposition to the sterilization laws. Attempts have been made to enact additional such laws in fourteen other states. Of the total of those sterilized, about 5 percent were criminals, 50 percent were adjudged insane and about 40 percent feeble-minded. California led all other states with more than 10,000 persons sterilized there since 1909. In Virginia, 2,000 persons have been sterilized since 1925, and in Michigan, since 1929, there have been 1,239 persons sterilized for criminality and insanity, plus 235 voluntary sterilizations. In Oregon, since 1923, there has been a total of 955 sterilized, and in Wisconsin, since 1913, a total of 678. States in which sterilization laws exist but in which there have been fewer cases of their application are Minnesota, Delaware, North Carolina, South Dakota, Oklahoma, Idaho, Iowa, Indiana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Carolina, West Virginia and Washington. States in which there have been unsuccessful attempts to enact sterilization laws, or in which such legislation is pending, are Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas and Wyoming.

* * * *

*The National Budget.*—The Commissioner of Internal Revenue announced that the collection of federal internal revenue taxes for the fiscal year 1934-1935 amounted to $3,299,435,572, the largest tax collection in fourteen years, and 23 percent greater than collection in the preceding fiscal year. Income taxes aggregated $1,099,230,383 and were at the highest level since 1930-1931. Excise, processing and stamp tax collections set a new record for the country's history. The National Industrial Conference Board, in expressing a hope recently for the balancing of the national budget, noted that if the increase of government revenues continues at the same

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rate—which the board considered not unlikely in view of improving business—there would be sufficient revenue in another year to cover all "ordinary" costs of the federal government, with the exception of debt retirement, and to leave a residue of about $1,500,000,000 for "emergency" outlays. President Roosevelt in the interest of economy, on the grounds that the peak of the emergency which had to be met by government action had been passed, signed an executive order placing the administration expenses of seven recovery agencies under the supervision of the Director of the Budget. These were the last of the recovery agencies to be put under this supervision, and brings the total to twenty.

*America's Foreign Trade.*—Thomas J. Watson, chairman of the American Section of the International Chamber of Commerce, believes that the United States has great prospects for increased foreign trade. In a New York *Times* article he writes that "here in the United States with 6 percent of the world's population, we manufacture 50 percent of the world's goods and consume 90 percent of our production. We have the other 94 percent of the world's population open to us for trade as standards of living rise—and they are rising in nearly every nation of Europe." In 1934, European countries accounted for 45 percent of our exports, North America 23 percent, Asia 19 percent, South America 8 percent, Africa 4 percent and Australia and New Zealand 3 percent. Mr. Watson points out that reciprocal trade agreements with countries like Belgium and Sweden automatically lower certain tariff rates for all other countries with which the United States has concluded most-favored-nation treaties. This American policy was endorsed by thirty-nine nations at the recent Congress of the International Chamber of Commerce at Paris, and discussions on reciprocal agreements have taken place between this country and Spain, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Finland, Italy and France. On September 8, United States Ambassador Caffrey announced that during the first eleven months of the reciprocal trade treaty with Cuba the dollar value of American sales to Cuba had increased by 60 percent. Figures from Argentina show that the United States' sales to Argentina increased about 15 percent during the first half of 1935. The Department of Commerce reported that total American exports in July amounted to $173,371,158, a gain of $11,699,073 over July, 1934; imports totaled $177,697,521, a gain of $50,468,100 over July, 1934. Exports for the first seven months of this year are about equal to the 1934 figure, but total imports have increased by $181,188,115.

*Bigger Navy.*—Authorization by the Navy Department for the construction of twenty-three fighting ships was announced. This will rapidly advance the administration's program to build to the full limits permitted by the London naval treaty fixing the 5—5—3 naval ratios. Private companies will build twelve of the new vessels at a cost of $59,225,500. The other eleven will be built by navy yards. The latter include a 10,000-ton light cruiser to be constructed at the New York Navy Yard. A 14,000-ton aircraft carrier costing $20,737,000 will be built by the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation of Quincy, Massachusetts. Completion of this ship, together with the Ranger, now in commission, and two others under construction by the Newport News Company, will give the United States navy four of the largest and newest aircraft carriers in the world and bring this branch of the force practically up to treaty strength. Other vessels to be built by private plants are three destroyers by the Bath Iron Works Corporation, Bath, Maine; two destroyers by the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation, Union Plant, San Francisco, California; three destroyers by the Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock Company, Kearny, New Jersey; and three submarines by the Electric Boat Company, Groton, Connecticut. Other than the light cruiser above referred to, ships to be built at navy yards are three submarines and seven destroyers. The navy already has in construction forty destroyers, ten submarines, seven light cruisers and three heavy cruisers, besides the enumerated aircraft carriers. Under a recent congressional authorization, naval line officers will be increased by 1,032 to a total of 6,531 and enlisted personnel will be increased from 82,500 to 93,000.

*Cooperatives in England.*—A press interview with Charles G. Tomlinson, advertising director of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, Manchester, recently reported in the New York *Times,* discloses the fact that this society is the largest importer of tea in the world and has its own estates in India and Ceylon. In addition to being the biggest milling organization in England, it is first in the making of boots and shoes and second only to the Lever interests in the manufacture of soap. The society also operates its own bank, which has an average daily turnover of $12,500,000. Merchandise purchases by English cooperatives totaled practically $1,000,000,000 in 1933. Mr. Tomlinson said that 13 percent of the retail distribution in England is done by consumer co-operatives, while similar organizations in this country account for less than 1 percent of our retailing activities. He believed that the lack of progress of consumer co-operatives here was "mainly due to the fact that chain stores expanded rapidly in this country before the co-operative idea began to take hold. In England, of course, the cooperatives came first and the progress of the co-operative societies has been steady since the pioneer Rochdale movement was launched ninety years ago. . . . In England, slightly less than one-half of the total population are members of cooperative societies, which deal in many types of merchandise and carry on varied essential activities from eating and drinking to general banking and housing-construction loans." Mr. Tomlinson asserted that the cooperative movement had "tremendous social significance in England," where it trained the working-man in elementary economics and broadened his vision. He credited it with having "saved England from a serious catastrophe and social upheaval during the depression years," and spoke with satisfaction of the progress of cooperatives in Italy and Germany today.

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# The Play and Screen

By GRENVILLE VERNON

## *Moon over Mulberry Street*

THE SEASON of 1935-1936 is at last open, a little later this year than a season's usual inauguration. The play chosen to open it was "Moon over Mulberry Street," by Nicholas Cosentino, presented by Standish O'Neill in association with Paul De Maria, with a song, "Moon over Mulberry Street," music by Harry Tierney, lyrics by Raymond B. Egan; the play staged by William Muir, and a setting by Louis Kennell; the offering denominated on the program as a comedy drama. The New York theatre is unfortunately not given to putting its best foot forward in its initial offerings, and the rule holds good this season. It isn't that there haven't been poorer plays than "Moon over Mulberry Street"; indeed the first fifteen minutes made one hope that a rather charming bit of sentimental *genre* comedy had arrived, but on the whole Mr. Cosentino's evocation of life in the Italian quarter failed to strike fire, and aside from the strictly Italian domestic scenes failed to live at all. It is evident that Mr. Cosentino knows his Italians, that is, the more gentle and sentimental side of them, and when they have nothing to do but talk family talk and eat Italian food and drink Italian wine, the play ambles along amusingly enough, with hints that it might evolve into another "Music Master" or even another "Abie's Irish Rose." But it doesn't. As soon as the author gets to his story, and a very trite story it proved to be, he gets hopelessly out of his depth.

The story is the old one of the poor Italian boy who falls in love with the rich daughter of his employer, but who in the end marries a girl of his own kind, having found the heiress unsuitable. To make such a tale live, something very near genius would be required in the manner of telling, and Mr. Cosentino is no genius. When he gets the Park Avenue heiress on the stage, the dialog borders on burlesque, and scenes which were intended to be taken seriously brought forth laughter. Among the people he knows Mr. Cosentino seems at home, but faced with Park Avenue debutantes and their swains, he flounders about in a sea of stilted phrases and preposterous actions. If Mr. Cosentino writes another play he should stick to the sort of people he introduces in the first fifteen minutes of his play, and forego adventurous excursions north and east of Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street.

The cast is better than the play, and three of the performers are very good indeed. William Edmunds as Piccino Morello, the Italian father of the family, gives a really admirable impersonation, one tender, humorous, salty, and in his scene at the end of the second act, when he tells his son of the people from whom he has sprung, moving in his simple eloquence. Valerie Bergere as Lucia Morello is almost equally good and veritable. Miss Bergere has played many parts in her long career, but she has done nothing better than her picture of this Italian mother. Olga Druce as Nina Baccolini gives a spirited portrayal of the sincere and fiery little Italian girl, and raises the character above the level of a mere stock figure. Good words too should be said for Mischa Ferenza's Angelo Baccolini, for Cornel Wilde's Fillipo Morello, and for Betty Kashman's Giovanna Baccolini. Less admirable is Gladys Shelley's portrait of the Park Avenue heiress. She seems ill at ease in the part, though perhaps it is the part that is as much at fault as the actress. Aside from one scene, which might very well have been left out, the play is innocuous enough. (At the Lyceum Theatre.)

## *The Dark Angel*

THIS is a rather uneven but on the whole an interesting film. It is written by Lillian Hellman and Mordaunt Shairp, from a play by R. B. Trevelyan, and though its story is hackneyed and its motivation at times unreal, many of the episodes are poignant, the dialog has distinction, and the photography is superb. It tells the tale of two men in love with the same girl during the Great War. The girl is engaged to one of the men, Alan Trent. Trent is suddenly called to the front and the couple are unable to get a license to marry in time, and so they spend one night without benefit of clergy. This episode is treated with a minimum degree of offense. The other man, Gerald Shannon, who is Trent's commanding officer, thinks that Trent has been unfaithful to the girl and prevents him going home on leave. Trent is thought to have been killed, and when Shannon returns he and the girl feel that between them they have killed Trent. But Trent is really only blinded, and, because he feels that the girl will now marry him only through pity, he refuses to go home. The girl, thinking Trent is dead, becomes engaged to Shannon, but when at last she meets Trent, she breaks her engagement and marries the man she really loves.

The story has moments of beauty and poignancy, though the refusal of Trent to go home because he is blind strains credulity. But this is the movies! So it is better to forget its falsity and to enjoy the magnificently imaginative photography, and the admirable acting. First honors go to Merle Oberon and Herbert Marshall. Miss Oberon proves that she is a real actress, an actress of charm, distinction and technical resource, while Mr. Marshall is admirable as ever. Fredric March's Trent is dramatically poignant, but his English enunciation is lamentable. Mr. March can act, but he should learn how to speak. Janet Beecher is excellent as Mrs. Shannon, as is John Halliday as Sir George Barton. These two artists are Americans and Mr. March should learn from them how to use the English language. The play is excellently directed by Sidney Franklin, and Gregg Toland's camera work is that of an artist of a high order of imagination. (At the Rivoli Theatre.)

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# Communications

## THE BROKEN GANGPLANK

Las Cruces, N. M.

TO the Editor: I desire to register a strong objection to the article on "The Broken Gangplank"—to the general tone and to almost every statement in it.

The idea of the author seems to be that three or four million youths have a just complaint because they have not had offered to them jobs which they can accept without "losing social position and the accompanying self-respect and pride." So, "they stand on the pier . . . awaiting repairs, not only on the gangplank but on the ship itself."

Who, may I inquire, is to make the repairs? There is no hint of that given in the article, the author merely says: "The repair job should be started at once, lifeboats lowered, and lifelines thrown out to those who are now sinking." He very wisely speaks in general terms, and under a metaphor at that. But he absolves the young people from any responsibility in the matter in such words as: "Smoldering in their hearts a deep resentment . . . increasing resentment. . . . Not only is youth suffering from certain illusions but it is unsatisfied [so are the rest of us]. . . . Having all the values enumerated above, young people will still be unsatisfied. They want a sense of achievement."

Now it stands to reason that youth out of a job is not nearly in as hard a case as an older person out of a job. He has more time ahead of him, at the very least. He has greater elasticity, greater adaptability, and should have equal or greater initiative and courage. If, after the past six years he has "the pathetic confidence that the depression will soon be over," his school has been grossly delinquent in its duty of fitting him for life. If he still has "blind faith that the school he attends will automatically assure him a job," his teachers must have been lying to him, at least by silence. I admit that there has been much deceit practised in comparing the earning capacities of high school and college graduates against those not so advantaged. Even at a tender age I could see that cause and effect were badly confused in these statements; that native ambition and energy were what caused students to persevere, and that these same habits of mind had a strong bearing on earning capacity. Nevertheless we thought that it was at least a benevolent lie, and let the statement pass unchallenged. There was likewise the obvious fact that the law of supply and demand would operate as surely on an overproduction of aspirants for white collar jobs as on any other product. But we all winked at the statement of the manufacturers: "There is no saturation point for honest values."

To that extent at least it is true that youth has a just complaint, just as his father; because schools, and economic and governmental leaders, have led the country into a morass. But youth has no more just complaint than age and has more time to change course. If a youth, however, continues to stand on the pier, waiting for someone to make repairs; if he be too lazy to exercise his "skills and even thought processes," in anything except a dignified job along the old lines; then he would not hold the job very long if he got it. "Habits of work are shattered, loafing is learned, and initiative is crushed," through lack of a job. I paraphrase Archbishop Spalding's aphorism and answer: If thou, Youth, canst be crushed by lack of a job; be glad to die. For you have a cotton picker's soul under your Ph.D.

"In years past the frontier was a safety valve which absorbed young people not needed in an established society . . . these conditions have changed." Yes indeed, they have changed. We still have a large frontier—Alaska—but not frontiersmen. Alaska could readily absorb a couple of million of young people who had the spirit of their grandfathers. But who nowadays will take up a rifle, an axe, and a portable radio, and carve himself a home in the wilderness, "seeking the food he eats and pleased with what he gets"? Nobody, of course. Not until there is a Great White Way on the Yukon where the midnight sons can frolic. Meanwhile they prefer to stand on the pier awaiting repairs.

Nor is the geographical frontier the only one. Henry Ford found a new frontier in a machine shop. The Wright brothers, from the still humbler bicycle shop, opened to the world the most magnificent frontier since the day of Columbus. There are at this moment a few young men and women in obscure positions who will later startle the world. And there are myriads of them who will carve their homes out of the wilderness of Broadway, Milwaukee Avenue, Lower Squankum, New Jersey, or Dona Ana County, New Mexico. But the ones who stand on the pier awaiting repairs to the ship will not only be "plowed under" but ought to be. They are the natural hewers of wood and drawers of water, regardless of how many degrees they sport.

We read somewhere of a famous headmaster of Rugby College who found a small boy in the school weeping.

"What's the matter," he inquired.

"I'm cold," the lad replied.

"You must expect to be cold, Sir. This is no girls' school."

Nor is this Year of Grace 1935, a girls' school; it is a semester in the grim old college of hard knocks.

It is quite true that during the boom days of the '20s, degree men were snapped up by eager employers as fast as they emerged from college, but the ones who could not produce have been squeezed out and are in the relief lines now. Times when just any college man can get a good job are as unhealthy as the days of 35-cent-a-pound cotton and bring about the same disastrous reaction.

As to delayed marriage and promiscuity, are they any worse now than in the boom times of the '20s? Or if so, is it not the natural prolongation of the curve which has been rising steadily for the past two or three decades —although we were promised that when everyone had a high school education, vice as well as crime and numerous other evils would decrease rapidly?

Let us return to the "established society" in which more young people are "not needed." Well, who is

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needed? One of the wisest of my teachers in the seminary used to warn us: "There is no one so dead as a dead priest." I know how quickly my place will be filled when I pass on. Almost no one is really needed.

I repeat: Almost no one is actually needed. But can he fit himself in? The author's idea seems to be that the United States is a sort of sealed jar with a balance between production and consumption which must be maintained within rather narrow limits. Many writers take this view, whence the family restriction idea. But the capacity of the United States to produce food and raw materials has not yet nearly been reached. It has not been reached in any state in the Union even under our present methods.

There is plenty to live on and to work with in our most fixedly "established society." So, even if young people be not needed they can, however, still live and work with profit to themselves and the body politic. What has failed is our system of distribution. We do very badly need economic thought in that specific direction. Which I trust is a slightly more definite statement for the benefit of youth, and age, than making repairs, lowering boats and throwing lifelines.

Not being an economist, I can offer little more than that in the way of suggestion for the country at large. But as to individuals, the problem is not usually so difficult, if they have any job at all. Thus: the auto manufacturers have a disproportionate share of the wealth of the country, but I can get my share of their wealth by not buying a new car; I can get my share of the tobacco kings' wealth by not smoking. Similarly I can decline to buy the products of Hollywood, the soft drink manufacturers, the breweries, the distilleries, chewing gum; I can take better care of my clothes and make them last longer; I can eat plainer food; in general, I can abstain from luxuries and save the difference. Thus I get my share of the wealth of the country and can use it to build up my situation still further. Those who are following this plan, with a moderate amount of common sense, are getting ahead in these days just as always.

But that is not what the average person wants. Reduce the swollen fortunes by taxation and let us have our luxuries just the same as ever. That is the general cry. We want to eat our cake and have it, and as long as that is our motto we may indeed have boom periods for a few years at a time but they will always be followed by breadlines. It is the natural and inevitable reaction.

The article of Professor Miller complains rather of those who have no jobs at all. Well, of course, after the gigantic spree of the later '20s a headache is bound to come, and many have to go on relief until the generality of the country learn sense and realize that they cannot spend their way into wealth. This process will throw some of the luxury makers out of work temporarily. But during the time of our katzenjammer we have to lower the standard of luxury and do a little plain living.

Still: How to get jobs for the three or four million? We cannot get them dignified jobs according to the standard to which they have looked forward. But if they are willing to adapt themselves to conditions, if a mechanical engineer be willing to work in a garage, a chemical engineer in a bakery, a journalist anywhere that he comes in contact with human beings, they will all find opportunity to use the education they have acquired at public expense; their brains will not atrophy unless they have been kept functioning till now only by frequent hypodermics from their professors. They will get small salaries to start, of course; and I doubt not but that they will be "unsatisfied." The number of persons throughout the world who have been satisfied with their position is very small at any time. Nor do I know any reason why they should thereby lose "social position and the accompanying self-respect and pride."

Personally, I boast that before I was ordained to the priesthood, my various gainful occupations ran all the way from teaching chemistry in a college to unloading freight cars on the New York Central docks. And be it understood that I was not a checker or timekeeper either. I was between the handles of a truck, the same as the rest of the gang. Previously I had worked carrying lumber in Portland, Oregon, and digging up cobblestone pavements in Salt Lake City, as well as being a traveling salesman over the Pacific Northwest and operating chemist in the smelter at El Paso.

Martin Dooley says that no one ever mistook Benjamin Franklin for a waiter because Benjamin Franklin never felt like a waiter. If the "fear of losing social position . . . [has] wrought havoc with the morale of many of our young people," then I say it is time that we quit trying to make silk purses out of unsuitable material, time we cease the practise of giving diplomas which only spoil good, skilled laborers, or which attempt to put a courageous heart into a quitter.

"You have a mouse's heart, now be a mouse."

REV. HENRY D. BUCHANAN.

## THE OLYMPIC GAMES

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Some demented *Prahlhans* defiled your weekly with a letter of unbearable arrogance (issue of August 23). Why did you print such lines of incurable madness? To demonstrate to what absurdities Hitlerism leads of necessity? Such a demonstration was not called for. Where a spark of common sense and truthfulness still remains, where the least bit of honesty and decency still prevails, there is the deepest regret felt over the undeniable fact that unfortunate Germany of our days is turned into a madhouse of confusion and corruption by a gang of men so blindfolded by self-deceit, pride and the curse of bloody crimes that the history of all generations provides no parallel when you consider the fine culture and the stolid character the German race was known and esteemed for.

Of course Hans will never concede what every student of German history regrets, that Germany began to deteriorate at the very moment when a great many Germans were misled and forced into protest and rebellion against the Catholic Church. But every reasonable person, who is not an inmate nor a spy of the German madhouse, sees quite clearly that it is the most impudent

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height of perversion to brand women and men unselfishly devoted for a lifetime to the service of the sick and the poor as thieves and traitors. These victims of a brazen hypocrisy may know that the whole civilized world admires them as heroes for their innate and well-preserved sense of duty. The victory of Nazism will be complete only then when every sane and honest person will be in prison and every crook and fool will be scot free to shoot one another for a national purge. In much less than five hundred years of Hitlerism there will be no German heart left to beat and to enshrine the cursed *Hackenkreuz.*

As to the Catholic Church her children feel absolutely safe, as neither Hans nor Hitler can make her fear nor tremble. We Catholics have never developed the vice to laugh or swear at those who are misled and deceived and corrupted. We pity them, we pray for them, we would be most happy to help them. The ones for whom we fear are the poor enslaved and terrorized German people, most of all the cheated German youth. The seducers, not leaders, who train the young to rebel against the God-established authority of the home and of the church and force them to mock at truth, justice and charity, and raise in their hearts hatred and mutual distrust, will not laugh when they meet Him Who plainly said: "He that shall scandalize one of my little ones, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea."

As a subscriber of your esteemed weekly I beg you to cause me never again the pain of reading as insane and insulting a letter as that of poor and stupid Hans.

My love for the German people can challenge Hans at any time by the fact that more than $50,000 passed through my hands and that I gave all my savings for the suffering German poor and orphans at the end of the World War. I blame the nonsense and injustice of Versailles for having driven a great nation into utter despair so that the most grotesque madman in the history of civilized mankind got a chance to assume power and to blasphemously claim God's blessings for being Satan's tool and to boast of having saved Germany from Communism, while in reality he does greater harm than Bolshevism could ever do in Germany. Communism is frank and blunt, while Hitlerism is a most abominable mixture of confounded lies and ridiculous pride, a most destructive system of seduction and perversion bound to impoverish and to pulverize a nation that is endowed to be great, provided its leaders and its people bow to God, to His Eternal Word and to His All-powerful Will.

Truth and justice, personal liberty and Christian charity above everything in the world, even above Hans and Hitler.

R. I.

*(The writer, known to us, wishes his identity to remain concealed.)*

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# Books

## English and Irish

*Three Englishmen, by Gilbert Frankau. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company.* $2.50.

*The Islandman, by Tomás Ó Crohan. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.* $2.50.

*Man of Aran, by Pat Mullen. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company.* $3.00.

ONE of these books is a novel, one is an autobiography, and one is an account of the filming of a motion picture in the Aran Islands, but they share a common quality in being the products of insular mentalities. If the other books are records of fact, so is Mr. Frankau's in its fashion; it is one of those thorough and slow-moving English novels which nowhere show a trace of the divine afflatus but do reveal an intimate (which is not to say profound) knowledge of the class with which they deal. Like many of them, it opens at Eton and mentally never strays far from that place. Whether Mr. Frankau's character is your true British cavalry officer, your familiar great surgeon, or your often-encountered high-flying financier, he always displays the sensibilities of the rugger field: he knows the rules, he abides by them, and he is quite infantile. It is this infantile quality which accounts for the unstinted details of daily life—the bath, meals, dress; for these are all parts of the game and careful attention to them takes up the energy that might otherwise be spent in activities that are hardly cricket, like thought or introspection. Since everything proceeds by the rules of the game, the novel has no characters in the better sense, only good stout players, three well-polished pukka sahibs. While it is true that Mr. Frankau's surgeon never wears a morning coat when he can avoid it and that his financier is a bit of a cad, they are at bottom public school men and their oddities are there so the reader will not confuse one with the other. Over 600 pages in length, "Three Englishmen" begins with the Boer War and ends with the present time, and probably contains a line from the most popular song of each of the intervening years.

Mr. Frankau's book has its scenes in England, Africa, India and France. The scene of Mr. Ó Crohan's book is the Blasket Islands and the coast of Kerry, but one feels that the Irishman has seen a great deal more than the Englishman. In describing the existence he had led for over seventy years on these small sea-stormed islands, it is true that Mr. Ó Crohan reveals a life which is in many ways as rigidly patterned as that of the three Englishmen, but within this pattern there is a richness of substance, a salty contact with reality. It would be easy to say that this seems so because of the poverty of the Blasket Islanders and the almost unremitting harshness of their struggle to survive; but what Mr. Ó Crohan reveals is not "grim reality" of this order: it is a way of life in which a man, for all the hostility of the environment from which he must wrest a living, can realize the potentialities of his nature and come to an understanding of the meaningfulness of life, without which there is no

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happiness. This is perhaps to read philosophical implications into the book that the author did not consciously set there; his avowed purpose is to let men know what life was like in his time. There can be no doubt of his success in that: forcefully and simply he re-creates his past and the men and women he lived it with; he brings to the reader the smell of peat being dug under a hot sun, the excitement and danger of seal-hunting on a rocky coast or a run of fish to be caught in heavy seas, and all those events, singular but ever recurring, which are the stuff of daily life. Some there is in his book which may at first strike the reader as naïve, yet reflection should show it to be the directness of a mind that has always been in touch with the constant factors in human experience. Originally written in Irish, "The Islandman" has been translated into admirable English by Dr. Robin Flower.

Pat Mullen's autobiography is devoted in the main to telling of the filming of "Man of Aran," Robert Flaherty's motion picture, in which he acted and in whose production he aided Mr. Flaherty. Residence in America and more contact with the outside world has made Mr. Mullen conscious of his rôle as an islandman in a way that Mr. Ó Crohan is not; one suspects that now and again he is playing the part with an eye on the effects. But on the whole his humor rings true, and if his book lacks the wisdom and maturity of "The Islandman," it still has an exciting tale to tell, so that all those who were moved by the fine cinema with which it shares its name will want to read this lively personal record. The book is illustrated with "stills" from the motion picture.

GEOFFREY STONE.

## One Experiment

*The Blue Eagle from Egg to Earth, by Hugh S. Johnson. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company.* $3.00.

"NRA was the greatest social and economic experiment of our age." In these words General Johnson opens the second paragraph of the Preface to the volume here under review. The statement is as true now as it was when written. Indeed, the truth of it has become more widely accepted since the experiment was abruptly ended by the devastating decision of the Supreme Court, May 27, 1935. Apparently the majority of those critics of NRA who ignorantly or superficially condemned it as ethically or economically unsound have, since the sentence of death was passed upon it, come to realize that its essential elements are greatly desirable and even necessary. In every department of our economic life former antagonists are almost frantically demanding the continuation of NRA standards through voluntary agreements. Small wonder that General Johnson passionately defends the institution and poignantly deplores what he regards as the mistaken policies under which it was operated during the last half-year of its existence.

The first twelve chapters of the book are mainly autobiographical, dealing with events in the author's life which have no close relation to NRA, even though they explain in a measure his ways of thought and action after

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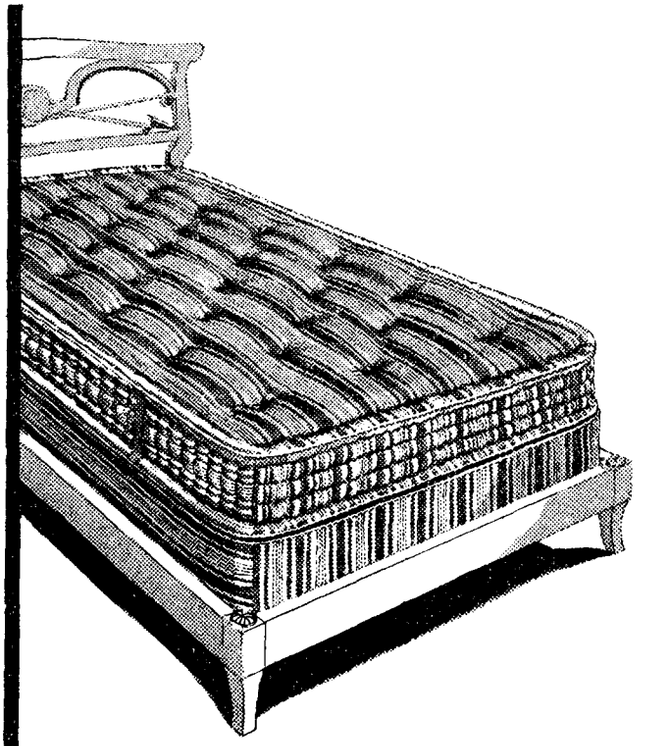

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# Next Week

**WHAT HAS BROKEN DOWN? by Christopher Hollis, is the first of two articles by the brilliant author of "The Breakdown of Money." In them he gives his answer to the questions: "What was the monetary system of the pre-war world? How far is it true that the conditions requisite for the working of that system no longer exist? How far is it true that the reestablishment of the pre-war system is therefore an impossibility?" The pre-war system, he explains, was the sterling system and the post-war, the dollar system. The former was anchored in gold and the country controlling it was a free-trade country, so that goods flowed naturally in a compensating action to the accumulating and the disbursing of gold. The impediments to the effective working of the dollar system are described and a clear picture presented of the inter-relations of the various countries of the world. . . . CATHOLICS AND THE CRISIS, by Michael Williams, is a plea for Catholics to subordinate their national differences in a world unity of faith and charity. Catholics, he writes, "have nothing but the chains of Mammon and of Caesar to lose: they have a world to gain for Jesus Christ," and he pleads for a supreme effort in the present crisis to arouse Catholics of all lands to unite as Catholics. . . . A DOM BOSCO IN EVERY PARISH, by John E. Green, outlines a practical plan for parish units to aid the unemployed, both by helping them to find work and by giving them assistance during the period of their unemployment. The aid to be given to the young people seeking work receives special consideration by the writer and he hopes that in one or many Catholic parishes another Saint John Bosco may be developed for the special guidance and training of hopeless and underprivileged youths. . . . IN RE ASSASSINATION, by Roger Shaw, surveys the lurid increase of assassinations there has been throughout the world in the past few years. The general history of assassination is considered briefly by Mr. Shaw, who is foreign editor of the *Review of Reviews*.**

he was put in charge of the institution. While the next four chapters treat of events that occurred before the inauguration of President Roosevelt, they have a very definite bearing upon the origin, the theories and the establishment of NRA. Chapter XIII opens with an extremely generous tribute to Bernard M. Baruch and goes on to expose the amateur and naive futilities of Mr. Hoover's speeches in the 1928 campaign—"economic essays with holes in them as broad as barn doors," says Johnson. Some extracts are quoted from a speech written by Baruch during that campaign, in which the 1929 depression was forecast as inevitable for the simple reason that adequate purchasing power was not being distributed among the masses. Chapter XIV presents a speech prepared jointly by Baruch and Johnson shortly before the Democratic Convention in 1932, in which the same explanation of the depression was powerfully and convincingly set forth. Chapters XV and XVI show that the "purchasing power theory" of the depression as held by these two men and a few others was responsible for the conception of NRA. The latter was not "an afterthought or an unexpected brainstorm conceived in the confusion of early 1933, but represents consistent philsophical economic pioneering" (page 157).

"The most obvious immediate way to erase the effect of the depression on wages and hours was the NRA project to decrease hours, to speed work and to increase wages to maintain purchasing power" (page 163). This was the conomic philosophy underlying NRA and it remains the only true economic philosophy in relation to industrial depression and recovery. Until it is applied, and even more thoroughly and drastically applied than under NRA, there can be no permanent revival of business.

The last fourteen chapters, comprising considerably more than half the volume, deal with NRA in operation. Most of the chapters are contentious as well as descriptive, now defending the NRA against criticism and now attacking policies with which the author does not agree. It is interesting and highly suggestive to find among the conclusions from his experience his deliberate belief that all labor should be organized and that labor should have representation on the industrial codes. Probably the most effective chapters in this part of the volume are those which expose the dishonest charge that the code for newspapers as originally drafted endangered freedom of the press, that the suspension of certain portions of the anti-trust acts fostered monopoly and that NRA involved suppression of the small business man. According to General Johnson, "the Little Fellow" was discovered by two or three young politicians early in the history of the NRA. Those who have first-hand acquaintance with the operation of the NRA are aware that the sympathy expressed with the plight of the Little Fellow both in and out of Congress was 99 percent based upon misinformation and falsehood. As a member of the Industrial Appeals Board, which was set up primarily to hear complaints of the Little Fellow under the codes, I can testify that General Johnson is completely right when he says that the real trouble is "that the Little Fellow does not want to pay code wages for code hours." As the General

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remarks, the real question involved in the so-called plight of the Little Fellow is: "Shall we lower minimum wages and raise maximum hours under NRA in favor of small enterprise as such?" Answering his own question, he declares that "nobody, big or little, has any right to engage in competitive business if his only method of doing so is to pay less than $12 a week for forty hours of human labor" (page 277).

The temptation is great to take up other points in this fascinating narrative. But I shall bring this review to a close with these summary statements: General Johnson has produced a book of great historical value; it is of absorbing interest to anyone who is interested in NRA and the theories upon which it was founded; the book exhibits an appealing picture of an exceedingly able man who is also a first-class fighting man, who has deep and varied human sympathies, who candidly acknowledges that he made many mistakes, who had a great vision of a scheme to bring about a large measure of social justice, who, for a while, made that vision almost come true, and who is, above all, an honest man and a hater of shams.

JOHN A. RYAN.

## Saint Paul

*Beyond Damascus, A Biography of Paul the Tarsian, by F. A. Spencer. New York: Harper and Brothers.* $3.00.

IN PAINTING a picture of Paul and his work "against a full background," the author of this work "felt justified in using with reservations material as early as the 'Iliad' or as late as the Apocryphal Acts to illustrate Paul's life and times." Material drawn from the history of the Crusades or the life of Mussolini might add picturesqueness to a study of the life of Napoleon, but it would unquestionably detract from the fidelity of the portrait. Liberalism in choice, coupled with a Pyrronistic spirit in dealing with sources, places a reader in the condition of expecting little from a historian by sweeping generalizations tinted by imagination and fantasy. It is rather confusing when the author, on one page, speaks of "using every ancient author examined in the original and every relic seen so far as possible on the spot which enable us to recapture some forgotten aspirations, the fold of a garment, the fall of a hand, or the upward lifting of an eye long since closed," and on the following page to learn: "No man can say without the possibility of error what source is good and what bad, nor can even scholars forego imagination entirely." Historians may not always be able to determine the exact value of individual sources, but they are not so much the victims of mere chance as to be compelled to fall back on imagination for lack of exact evidence.

Through the latitude he allowed himself in the selection and use of sources the author of this book has written a vivid narrative of Paul's life. In borrowing extraneous material, however, to fill in the background, he leaves the impression that Paul was a puppet hurried on in his career by forces and influences the significance of which he, himself, did not understand. The frequent use of


# SIX INDEPENDENTS—

And all of them Catholics. Which is not surprising, since Freedom is possible only to Catholics. This is not simply the lusty challenge of people who have looked too long on Belloc. We could prove it; and would gladly do so here, if space were less expensive. Anyhow, it is so. The six of them are Catholics. They would be.

Daniel Sargent writes of four of them in FOUR INDEPENDENTS ($2.00). His four are a philosopher—Brownson—and three poets—Claudel, Gerard Manley Hopkins and Peguy. This book really is literary criticism, unlike most of the writing so named—which is literary only in the sense that it is about literature. The reader will understand independence and Catholicism the better for studying these practitioners of both.

As independent as any of Daniel Sargent's four is Isabella of Spain, heroine of ISABELLA THE CRUSADER ($2.00) by William Thomas Walsh. Everyone knows that she was responsible for the discovery of America and the Spanish Inquisition—an oddly-assorted pair of feats. She also created Spain, and began the roll-back of the Mahommedan attack upon Europe. The modern world cannot be understood without her. She planned campaigns, rode into battle, hanged malefactors. She was not, we fear, an emancipated woman for she prayed much, was a good wife to a not over-faithful husband, and bore many children; but she makes emancipation look pallid.

Independent Number 6 is Laurence Oliver, who writes his own book, TADPOLES AND GOD ($2.00). He is a little like the Bishop who told us that he longed to be let loose in a church statuary shop with a shillelagh. Laurence Oliver gets among the figures of present-day veneration—the Shaws, the Wellses, the Eugenists, and the like—and enjoys himself. This is not simply one more Catholic propagandist on the rampage. He has a deadly eye and knows where to find the clay in every figure.

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outworn clichés, such as, "The first century was a period of shaken nerves," "Never was there an age which longed more fervently for salavation," conveniently bridges difficulties by substituting assumptions for proofs. What evidence is there that the people in the time of Paul longed more fervently for salvation than they did at other times? Psychology applied to history finds a ready solution for all great crises of the past by asserting they were caused by shaken nerves. There are limits beyond which not even psychologists may venture, but there are none to restrain the "perhaps," "probably," "ought to," etc., school of historiographers. Thus the author says: "If Saul saw and knew nothing of these things he must have been blind and deaf"; "Perhaps during Saul's boyhood there already existed in Tarsus," etc.; "Perhaps in weak moments he cast a doubtful eye at the pomp and fervor of pagan religion"; "Perhaps this was his sin against the law"; "He is using language that must have been familiar to him." Both experience and logic cry out against such inferences and such snap judgments, though they are no more misleading than the attempt to show that Paul was influenced by the "false cynics," "men and women, the Billy Sundays and the Aimee Semple McPhersons of their day." "Their roving life, if not their tenets, would appeal, I think, to a Jewish lad of Paul's temperament." Jewish lads, in Los Angeles and New York, seem to be singularly immune to the influence of the Sundays and the McPhersons. Why charge Saul with being more susceptible!

In attempting to show that Paul became the embodiment and the expression of various religions currents, that he was emotional and jumpy in a time of shaken nerves, the author finds the solution of his career and his doctrine especially in his early relationship with the Mystery of Religions in his native city of Tarsus. "The important thing to remember is that Saul lived his most impressionable years in the very nursery, if not the cradle, of oriental religion. And these impressions lasted. The Christ Whom Paul was to preach was picked as a Jewish Messiah, but such He was not. Paul's Christ was a god-man, a wiser and purer cult-hero than any ever seen in the streets of Tarsus, but a cult-hero nevertheless." There are so many unwarranted assumptions and hypotheses underlying this statement that one is amazed the author himself did not see the utter futility of his argument. It is not certain that Mithraism was known in Tarsus when Paul was a boy, nor that the Mithraism the author describes was the Mithraism of the first century, and there is no evidence whatsoever that "Saul peered fearfully with his playmates into the dark groves that surrounded Mithraic caves." In fact, from what is known of Paul's boyhood it seems likely he would not have troubled himself with Mithraism, and it is certain his training would have caused him to hate it. The doctrines of the Mystery Religions are made to coincide with the teachings of Christianity by building up the one and tearing down the other, but even then essential differences remain so even the most liberal adjustment cannot prove that one was derived from the other.

PATRICK J. HEALY.

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## The Pivot of the Empire

*Queen Victoria, by E. F. Benson. New York: Longmans, Green and Company.* $3.50.

THIS volume is curious in several ways. It commences with a list of illustrations, but has no indication as to what its twenty-one chapters contain. The Index is of persons rather than of subjects, policies or social and economic developments in which the Queen was interested; yet the Honorable Harriet Phipps, Miss Frances Drummond and Sir John McNeill, who were personal attendants of the Queen for years, are not mentioned. Indeed within the portraiture of events and persons one cannot escape the feeling that here we have the novelist and not the historian. In describing the two Jubilees of 1887 and 1897 no mention is made of the services at Westminster to which the House of Commons went, or of the magnificent address of Archdeacon F. W. Farrar. It seems as if the author can only describe factors at the beginning of the Queen's life and then jump to the narration of events which are part of his own personal memory of politics and public affairs.

The final five lines which complete the volume come as an anti-climax to the summary of the life of one who found Europe disturbed, at her coronation, by a course of revolutions which continued to 1851—fourteen devastating years—and then witnessed in the succeeding twenty years the rise of Prussia through war to the creation of a German Empire. This period was to be followed by the expansion of European interests in Asia and in Africa, thereby sowing the seeds from which sprang the international rivalries in these continents with their repercussions on European problems. All these exclusions indicate plainly the non-historical character of the book. But as a plan of chatty persiflage of passing events limited to a truly late Victorian survey of court life and personalities, this volume has attractions, and there are some charming thumb-nail sketches.

Many critics have looked upon the Queen as a rallying point or a figure head, but few seem to grasp that for over sixty years, during which Europe simmered with unrest and discontent, she remained a monarch and saw her empire pass from a loose colonial organization into a group of soverign states which when the test came withstood the shock of a World War. True she did not witness the World War, but she saw the incipience of troubles in South Africa, in Egypt, in Fashoda, also the Boxer Rebellion in China, the Battle of Concessions, the Open Door Policy—and many more such questions, some of which are still unsolved. But these are not in the picture of her reign as Mr. Benson sees it. It would be well to keep in mind that in an age of adventure in colonial expansion and scientific development, this Queen became the idol of England—the pivot of British Empire. As time lengthens its record this lonely woman increases in stature and in the measure of her understanding of national and international statecraft. This book should be consulted but it cannot be regarded as an adequate biography of a woman nor record of a great life.

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## Briefer Mention

*The Craft of Prayer, by Vincent McNabb, O.P. London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne. 2/6.*

FOR its point of registration this excellent and elevating small book considers the Our Father as the model prayer, the one given by Our Lord when His disciples asked Him to teach them to pray. The three invocations and the four petitions are examined in detail, against a rich background of Our Lord's own life as illustrative of the way of Christian living and with a wise and appealing application to ordinary, every-day living now. In the Our Father, says Father McNabb, "everything is in right order. If desires are out of order, the whole person is out of order. What is good for the individual is good for the community. This prayer should be a program for states. They would find in it the means of saving the world." Altogether this is a very simple book but a very profound one in its illumination of the seven essential desires which are conducive to life, rather than destructive of it, and of Saint Thomas Aquinas's conception of prayer as an act of the practical intellect, requisite for setting subsequent activities in order.

*Father and I: Memories of Lafcadio Hearn, by Kazuo Koizumi. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.*

LAFCADIO HEARN died when his son, author of the present memoirs, was ten years old. Accordingly the book is reminiscence of things seen and heard in childhood—of Hearn's attitude toward his family, of his mingled probity and severity, of his charm and delicate health. It reveals the famous stylist in quite a different light from that familiar to students of letters. The writing is, at least to an American, extraordinarily picturesque. The book will interest devotees of Hearn, and might well be read generally for the insight it affords into Japanese character and social history.

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